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VICTORY PICTURES IN A TIME OF DEFEAT
Depicting War in the
Print and Visual Culture of Late Qing China
1884-1901

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Thesis submitted for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in the History of Art
2014

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Declaration for PhD thesis

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ABSTRACT

This thesis addresses the development of the pictorial genre known as the ‘victory picture’ (Ch. *desheng tu* 得勝圖, *zhangong tu* 戰功圖) in 19th century China. Largely associated with production under the patronage of the Qianlong emperor (r. 1736-95), victory pictures were thought to have been confined to the imperial milieu. However, my research has revealed that such pictures found expression in late Qing popular culture through the medium of sheet-prints (often erroneously referred to as ‘New Year Pictures, *nianhua* 年畫).

An analytical framework has been established by bringing together hitherto isolated bodies of material in different institutions in several countries. The woodblock prints that form the primary basis of this thesis have mostly come from the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris; the British Library, the British Museum and SOAS in London, and the Shanghai Library and Shanghai History Museum.

This thesis focuses on popular prints depicting scenes from the Sino-French War (1884-85), the Sino-Japanese War (1895) and the Boxer Rebellion (1899-1901), in particular, those from the urbanized Jiangnan-Shanghai region and its publishing and distribution networks in South China. This locates them vis-à-vis the contexts of modernity, the development of news reportage and mass media and the treaty-port environment. It examines why the victory picture was so prevalent at a time when the Qing armies faced constant defeat.

With the rise of naval power, and the theatre of war shifting to the sea, I also examine how a new iconography for war was developed through these popular prints, as maritime art was largely unfamiliar in China. As the prints were widely circulated and copied, the phenomenon of their seriality over time and space is also examined. The victory print is thus not only understood as a picture but as an object, specific to its period and medium. Finally, the print itself serves as a primary source: its rubric yields valuable information for a new understanding of the popular print market.

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Fieldwork and research on primary resources would not have been possible without scholarships, grants and fellowships from various institutions. Thanks to the Irwin Trust, University of London and the Center for Chinese Studies, National Central Library, Taipei, for their research grants; to the Institute of Philology and History, Academia Sinica, Taipei and the Royal Asiatic Society, London for visiting fellowships.

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INTRODUCTION

This study focuses on popular Chinese sheet prints produced in the 19th century depicting war and rebellion, incidences that were the leitmotif of daily life in late Qing China as the Manchu dynasty faltered towards its demise and a Republic gradually came into existence. In terms of both media and subject-matter, these were materials that have '[suffered] from a history only interested in more noble subjects'¹. Not surprisingly, the survival of such prints has been rare; they were ephemera, the fabric of everyday non-elite life and therefore not treasured and preserved and definitely not privileged in the traditional art canon. However, largely unstudied and forgotten prints in museum and library collections outside and within China, mostly gathered by curious outsiders, offer opportunities for substantive research.² An analytical framework has been established in this thesis by bringing together hitherto isolated bodies of material located in different institutions in several countries. With developments in archival technology and digitization, more of these prints are being discovered and made accessible. For this thesis, I have focused primarily on depictions of the Sino-French War (1884-85), the Sino-Japanese War (1894-95) and the Boxer Rebellion (1899-1901), and relied mostly on prints and works from the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, the British Museum, the British Library and the School of Oriental and African Studies in London, and the Shanghai Library and Shanghai History Museum.

Because of their historical and political subjects, on the rare occasions when such prints are used by historians of China, they have often been read at face value; regularly subjugated to the written word, they are castigated for being

¹ Roger Chartier, *The Culture of Print: Power and the Uses of Print in Early Modern Europe*, Oxford and Cambridge, 1989, p. 3. Chartier had made this observation made in respect of the *placard* in European culture. Chinese prints depicting the Sino-French conflict were reproduced in the illustrated supplement of *Figaro* on 28 June 1884 and were in fact described as '*placards*' (see André Lévy, 'À propos des "canards," ou feuilles occasionelles et des illustration d'actualités en prémoderne', in *Études sur le conte et roman chinois, Publications de l'École Française d'Extrême-Orient* 82-83. Paris: École Française d'Extrême-Orient, 1971, p. 57).

² Although not discussed here, the preservation of such bodies of material in certain types of institution can also be understood in the context of the discourse on anthropological theories of exchange, which explains why some visual objects may have been more 'mobile' than others, and on the impact of colonialism.

factually incorrect or instruments of propaganda.³ However, when their interpretation is distanced from the surrounding literature and sited within the prints themselves, both as subject and object, a complex web of relationships emerges. It exposes the interface of visual, print and popular culture within a society polarized by regionalism, rapid modernization and urbanization, and contradicts some long-held historical and art-historical suppositions of the imperial milieu, the nineteenth century, popular print and cultural production, which are explained in later detail in this Introduction.

Since sheet prints can be distinguished by their regional characteristics, with distinctive styles, manners of production, market circulation and perceptions of subjects-matter, it is not possible to make holistic observations that are applicable to the entire China. As such, this study focuses mainly on prints primarily from the urbanized Jiangnan-Shanghai region and its publishing and distribution networks in South China, where the established traditions of woodblock printmaking interacted directly with the experimentation, the modernities, the new technologies and new 'ways of seeing' fostered by the global-local environment of the treaty port.⁴

Through focusing on depictions of three conflicts over a time period of almost twenty years—Sino-French War (1884-85), Sino-Japanese War (1895), and the Boxer Rebellion (1899-1901)—this study explores the autonomous visuality of these prints. I argue that these renditions belong to the genre of 'victory pictures' (*desheng tu* 得勝圖 and *zhangong tu* 戰功圖) and are not portrayals of actual event or news reportage as has been commonly understood. The concept of 'victory pictures' offers one aspect from which to understand the militarization of culture initiated by the Qing dynasty (1644-1911) emperors and how that impacted not just elite but also popular culture. It also enables us to trace how a pictorial genre evolved in continuum over the 18th and 19th century,

³ See Jane E. Elliot, *Some Did It for Civilisation, Some Did It for Their Country: A Revised View of the Boxer War*, Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 2002. Examples of these prints were also used as covers for publications by Jonathan D. Spence (*God's Chinese Son: The Taiping Heavenly Kingdom of Hong Xiuquan*, London: HarperCollins, 1996) and Paul A. Cohen (*History in Three Keys: The Boxers as Event, Experience, and Myth*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1997).

⁴ For comparison, see James Flath, *The Cult of Happiness: Nianhua, Art, and History in Rural North China*, Vancouver and Seattle: UBC Press, 2004, who locates such prints in the context of *nianhua* production in the context of the village-based print industry in locales like Yangjiabu in Shandong, Wuqiang and Yangliuqing in Hebei, and Zhuxianzhen in Henan.

as all too often narratives in history and art history often make a stark break between the grandeur and the imperialist expansion of the 'long' 18th century and the decline, rebellion and foreign incursions that characterized the 19th century.

I. 'The invisibility of the visual':

Locating Media, Object, Subject and Intertextuality

A comment made by Professor John Dower in his essay 'Throwing Off Asia II: Woodblock Prints of the Sino-Japanese War (1894-95)' on the *MIT Visualizing Cultures* website only serves to underscore the invisibility of these Chinese prints from the visibility of East Asia, even for historians who promote image-driven scholarship. Dower, noting that the Sino-Japanese War marked the highpoint of Meiji woodblock art, made the comparison that 'there was no counterpart to this on the Chinese side—no such popular artwork, no such explosion of nationalism, no such nation-wide audience ravenous for news from the front'.⁵ The prints discussed in this thesis clearly refute their absence and, as demonstrated in Chapters 2, 3 and 4, the wars were avidly followed in China.

I first came upon examples of such prints (supposedly depicting the Taiping Rebellion), purely by accident, in the mid-1990s in the SOAS Library. They seemed to possess a liveliness and energy that I had not encountered before in Chinese imagery. Intrigued by their combination of visual complexity and cartoonish rendition, I wanted to find out more about them. But there appeared to be a paucity of information: Why were they made, how were they conceived and how were they used? Why were they not included in classic histories of printing? Why were they not included in publications and exhibitions on printmaking with an art-historical bent? On the rare occasions when they were published, why were they, despite being depictions of violence, referred to as *nianhua* 年畫 (lit. New Year's Pictures) – a visual category that had auspicious connotations? Within our existing categories of understanding visual imagery and print types, how would you describe and classify them? Why, apart from works from the Qing imperial domain, there appeared to be a seeming absence of representations of battle and conflict in Chinese visual culture?

⁵ John Dower. 'Throwing off Asia', *MIT Visualizing Cultures*
http://ocw.mit.edu/ans7870/21f/21f.027/throwing_off_asia_02/toa_essay01.html (accessed 27 November 2012)

In particular, the definition of *nianhua* seemed problematic. It evokes images of door gods or folkloric and quasi-religious subjects that were replaced at the beginning of each year. As Ellen Johnston Laing observes: it is 'a term entirely too narrow to indicate the full range of subjects and purposes of prints, for it implies such prints were solely produced at New Year's time.... In reality, many prints were used at different times throughout the year'.⁶ In fact, the term *nianhua* was rarely used until the early 20th century. As observed by James Flath: 'In all of China's literate tradition, down to the early twentieth century, there are no more than a dozen works that even mention *nianhua*, Gu Lu's *Qing jia lu* 清嘉錄 (c. 1835) providing one of the more comprehensive accounts with its 80-word introduction to *nianhua* and some 400 words on door gods'. Although Flath uses '*nianhua*' as a term of convenient reference, he is fully aware of the perceptions created by its use and makes the disclaimer that the 'absence of published opinion thus disqualifies any pretension to extract an authorial or otherwise personal meaning'.⁷ Thus to avoid confusion and ambiguity the terms 'popular print' and 'sheet print' are the preferred usage here as it clearly defines the physical nature of the material and it also covers a multitude of media ranging from traditional woodblock to other mechanized processes like lithography, and subject-matter both religious and secular material. This is also closer to the terms *hupian* 畫片 and *huazhang* 畫張 which were common usage during the time period covered in this study.⁸

The problematic dichotomy between the elite and the popular is a thread that runs through the dissertation. The other conundrums can perhaps best be described from the perspectives of the medium, the object, the subject and its intertextuality. Falling within the overarching conformity to Confucian value systems, the erasure of such prints from the visual and cultural landscape of China can be attributed to what I would describe as 'four primacies': of painting over other forms of visual representation (of elite over popular); of ideology over

⁶ Ellen Johnston Laing, 'Reform, Revolutionary, Political, and Resistance Themes in Chinese Popular Prints, 1900-1940', in *Modern Chinese Literature and Culture* 12, 2 (2000), p. 124fn.

⁷ Flath, 2004, p.7.

⁸ Wang Shucun, 'Guanyu minjian nianhua', in *Zhongguo Minjian Nianhua Shi Lunji*, Tianjin: Tianjin Yangliuqing Chubanshe, 1991, pp. 162-71 (first published in *Meishu Yanjiu*, 1980:2).

intrinsic meaning; of *wen* (the literary) over *wu* (the military), and of word over image. The discussion that follows also serves as a review of existing scholarship.

1. The Medium: Painting over other forms of visual representation

Traditional connoisseurial approaches in Chinese art (which, according to Craig Clunas, is 'sometimes defined rather narrowly as painting') have focused on the privileging of the masterpiece and of a continued enforcement of values and opinions espoused by canonical artists and theorists that began in the 11th century.⁹ Even within the confined boundaries of painting – until the mid-1990s, when there was a flurry of interest in the new cultural forces that were shaping the Shanghai School — the accepted narrative was that innovative forces were spent by the 19th century.

Within this context, the medium of print hardly makes the cut for individualism and exclusivity. On the occasions when it was admitted as part of China's art history, the focus had been on the 'lofty' — works of a painterly inclination like the manuals *Shizhuzhai shuhua pu* 十竹齋書畫譜 (*A Manual of Calligraphy and Painting from the Ten Bamboo Studio*) and *Jieziyuan huazhuan* 芥子園畫傳 (*Manual of the Mustard Seed Garden*); subjects that the literati elite were interested in, such as the ink-cake compendia *Fang shi mopu* 方氏墨譜 and *Cheng shi moyuan* 程氏墨苑, and bibliophilic objects like luxury illustrated editions of fiction and drama — and the discourse located within a framework of traditional suppositions that divided artist and artisan, painter and draughtsman, literati-amateur and professional, picture and painting, and imperial and other.¹⁰ However, the diverse technologies of print with its tantalizing potential for picture-making and reproduction challenge us to construct 'a frame of reference that will encompass types of objects which have historically been held apart'.¹¹ Clunas's observation in respect of the Ming period (1368-1644) is equally relevant in respect of the period in this study: 'any account of visuality at this

⁹ Craig Clunas, *Pictures and Visuality in Early Modern China*, London: Reaktion, 1997, p. 10.

¹⁰ See for example the selection of works that are deemed representative of China's history of woodblock printing in the monumental classic work by Zheng Zhenduo (1898-1958): *Zhongguo banhua shi tulu*, Shanghai, 1940-47.

¹¹ Clunas, 1997, p. 9; see also Walter Benjamin, *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, 1936.

time will have to engage with the complete spread of ... figures, maps, plans, charts and author portraits, alongside the better studied aspects of the subject'.¹²

In the decade and a half since Clunas made these observations, the discipline of art history has embraced the study of visibility, its ambit has extended beyond elite or fine art and masterpieces to include mass cultural images, 'low' art, and commercial and popular imagery not unlike the materials that form the basis for this thesis. Unlike the limited range and audience of elite art, the dispersal of printed material raises provocative issues about the circulation, reception and seriality of imagery. In terms of aesthetics, qualities like visual expressiveness, eloquence and complexity that are used to describe painting can also be seen in imagery rendered in other media.¹³

2. The Object

a. The tyranny of ideology: A reflection on early scholarship

Popular prints came under the umbrella of the generic term *banhua* 版畫 (pictorial prints). In the early and mid-20th century, when *banhua* became a subject of specialist writing, it coincided with a time when Chinese intellectuals were seeking to define and preserve China's national patrimony. The concept of 'national essence' (ch. *guocui*, jp. *kokusui* 國粹) was much discussed in the context of 'reclaiming' Chinese tradition for its own people, and asserting China's place in the world, after centuries of Manchu rule and, more recently, the assault of Western imperialism. The journal *Guocui Xuebao* 國粹學報, which was published between 1905-11, and addressed specific aspects of what its editors deemed to be China's national essence: included politics, history, approaches to study (*xuepian* 學篇), literature, art (*meishu* 美術), natural sciences.¹⁴ Central to such a project was the idea of establishing a canon and the writing of 'systematic narrated history'. For Chinese art, especially painting, and excluding printmaking, these tasks had been undertaken by *guohua* artists such as Zheng Wuchang 鄭午昌 (1894-1952) and Fu Baoshi 傅抱石 (1904-65).¹⁵ By comparison, the writing on

¹² Clunas, 1997, p. 33.

¹³ James Elkins has made the observations in respect of 'informational imagery'. 'Art History and Images That Are Not Art', *The Art Bulletin* 77, no. 4 (December, 1995), p. 553.

¹⁴ *Guocui Xuebao*, 1905-11. (Online edition: http://www.tbmc.com.tw/english_version/chinesedata/chinese_15.htm)

¹⁵ Guo Hui, 'Writing Chinese Art History in Early Twentieth-century China', PhD dissertation, Leiden University, 2010, pp. 10, 29-39, 45-48.

banhua, perhaps due to its connection with literature and aspects of the literati culture, fell within the purview of writers, men of letters.

This agenda can clearly be seen in Zheng Zhenduo 鄭振鐸's 1940 accompanying essay to his compilation *Zhongguo banhua shi tulu* (*Illustrated history of the Chinese pictorial print*): his opening sentence baldly states that China's pictorial print culture to be the earliest in the world and had been in existence some 1,400 years before the first pictorial prints were made in Europe. He makes the observation that while the West admired the prints of the Floating World, the Japanese artists and printmakers were deriving their techniques and ideas from Chinese works like the *Mustard Seed Garden Manual of Painting* (*Jieziyuan Huapu*). In attempting a global, comparative approach to position China's print culture, Zheng invariably looks to the pictorial prints created with an elite, literati audience in mind like the *Taiping Shanshui tuhua* and Chen Hongshou's *Bogu yezi* and stacks them against the likes of Holbein and Dürer. Perhaps because one of his main purposes in the essay was to re-establish China's pre-eminent position as the inventor and innovator of printing, he plays only cursory attention to popular prints which were largely ephemeral anyway (*minjian banhua*, *nianhua*, *fengsu hua*).¹⁶

Zheng Zhenduo wrote at a time when the war of resistance against the Japanese was at its height, and the intellectuals in China were ideologically divided, both writing about culture and creating cultural artefacts became politically charged acts. Ever since Lu Xun 魯迅 (1881-1936) appropriated the medium of woodblock printing as a weapon for protest against social ills in the 1930s, subsequent Chinese writings on the subject, well into the 20th century, have been couched in leftist terminology, which ironically enforced the elite-popular divide.¹⁷ To distinguish their work from craftsmen printmakers before them, Lu Xun and his followers called their works *muke* 木刻 (woodcut), adding another facet to the complicated identity of the pictorial print.

¹⁶ Zheng Zhenduo, 'Zhongguo banhua shi tulu zixu' (1940), republished in *Zheng Zhenduo Meishu Wenji*, Beijing: Renmin Meishu Chubanshe, 1985, pp. 3-17.

¹⁷ Which the artist Huang Miaozi described as the 'revolutionary theory of art' (*gemin meishu lilun*) in Huang, 'Aying meishu lunwen ji houji' in *Aying meishu lunwen ji*, Beijing: Renmin Meishu Chubanshe, 1982, p. 181.

By the time the Chinese Communist Party was ensconced in Yan'an in the late 1930s, a communist folk art movement had emerged and *nianhua*, regarded as the quintessential 'peasant cultural form' came to be used for propaganda purposes. In its incarnation as *xuanchuan hua* 宣傳畫 (propaganda pictures), these pictorial prints differed radically from the *muke* the urbanized followers of Lu Xun were producing.¹⁸ Here, CCP soldiers had replaced the door gods as guardians of the home and the community, and the figures, in other popular forms like the *Gengzhi tu* 耕織圖 (Pictures on Tilling and Weaving), were replaced by archetypal Communist farmers and factory workers.¹⁹

Writings about print thus became increasingly focused on the *nianhua*, which were invariably viewed through the prism of Communist ideology that claimed two art histories – one for the ruling classes and one for the masses.²⁰ A locus classicus in the second paragraph of the 1954 publication *Zhongguo nianhua fazhan shilue* 中國年畫發展史略 (*A History of the Development of Chinese New Year's Prints*) by the influential playwright and journalist Aying 阿英 (Qian Xingcun 錢杏邨, 1900-77) employs the following classification for popular prints in respect of their subject-matter: one is for the 'service of the feudal (*fengjian* 封建) ruling classes to promote feudal thinking and feudal values', and the other is to express the 'thoughts, emotions and hopes' of the masses.²¹ In addressing the type of battle prints that form the basis of this study, Aying noted that even in the 'old' society, these works already possessed value as propaganda for promoting 'anti-imperialism' (*fandi* 反帝) and nationalism.²² Accepting their anti-imperialist value, Wang Shucun 王樹村, the doyen of *nianhua* studies, offers a conformist explanation for their rarity in China: he reckons that they were deemed vulgar and not worthy of inclusion in respectable collections, since both collectors and connoisseurs were members of the ruling classes whose pastimes were for their self-interest and of benefit only to their own class, it was therefore not surprising

¹⁸ Flath, pp. 134-35.

¹⁹ See for example, Flath, figs 6.4-6.8.

²⁰ So wrote the *guohua* painter Shao Yu (b. 1919) in his preface to Aying, *Zhongguo nianhua fazhan shilue*, Beijing: Chaohua Meishu Chubanshe, 1954.

²¹ Aying *Quanji*, Hefei: Anhui Jiaoyu Chubanshe, 2003, vol. 8, p. 550.

²² Ibid, p. 686 (first published in *Renmin Ribao*, 21 February 1961).

that works that contained elements of rebellion or which could excite popular feeling were not being preserved or studied.²³

b. The problems of classification: Changing paradigms of the popular print

These victory pictures also appear to defy traditional categories of classification within the context of modern *nianhua* studies, which were identified on the basis of subject matter (*ticaí* 題材) and type (*fenlei* 分類), the latter presumably implying some elements of use. Regarded as late developments in the sheet print repertoire, the victory pictures present a problem as they do not fit neatly within either of these categories, in fact, when it comes to discussing this material, many of the more general works appear to have difficulties distinguishing one from the other. Consequently, this could be one reason why many studies avoid the discussion of these prints altogether. Two works on the subject are symptomatic of this problem. John Lust's *Chinese Popular Prints*, while appearing to be the first comprehensive study of the subject in the West, appears to have assembled these Chinese writings without examining them critically. He makes the assumption that the war prints are 'real' and puts them under the category of 'Politics and Foreign Relations' but avoids mention of them in his discussion of display and use. The volume on the popular print in the encyclopaedic publication on the folk arts in China, *Zhongguo Minjian Meishu Quanji* 中国民间美术全集 invites similar criticism. Deng Fuxing, in his introductory article, classifies them, in terms of subject-matter, under genre scenes and like Lust, avoids them altogether in his discussion of type. To add to the confusion, the one example of a war print in the *Quanji* has been placed under the section on theatrical prints.²⁴ This connection with the theatre is discussed in Chapter 2. Not surprisingly, subsequent academic studies of the popular print in the West that focused on both its production and representation have sited their narratives in the transition from anti-imperialism to reform to revolution and resistance.²⁵

²³ Wang Shucun, 'Fandi de minjian nianhua', in *Zhongguo Minjian Nianhua shi lunji*, Tianjin, 1991, p. 200 (first published in *Zhongguo Meishushi Lunji*, 1982:2).

²⁴ John Lust, *Chinese Popular Prints*, Leiden: Brill, 1996, pp. 228-33, 238-41; Deng Fuxing (ed.), *Zhongguo Minjian Meishu Quanji: Zhuangshi bian. Nianhua juan*, vol. 9, Jinan: Shandong Jiaoyu Chubanshe, 1995, pp. 3-4.

²⁵ See Flath, 2004; Laing, 2000; Chang-tai Hung, 'Repainting China: New Year Prints (Nianhua) and Peasant Resistance in the Early Years of the People's Republic.' *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 42.4 (October 2000): 770-810. Tanya McIntyre, 'Chinese New Year Pictures: The Process of Modernization, 1842-1942', PhD thesis, University of Melbourne, 1997.

More recently, with the initiation of a global dialogue on intangible cultural heritage under the auspices of UNESCO²⁶, writings about *nianhua* in China have shed their ideological slant and have instead acquired a sense of urgency, refocusing on the preservation and documentation of *nianhua* as a fast-vanishing traditional craft. Two large-scale projects have been instigated under the leadership of Feng Jicai 馮驥才, a well-known public intellectual and scholar of folk culture. The first, which involved the recording of oral histories from woodblock printmakers still practising the *nianhua* craft in historical centres of production, resulted in a 14-volume compilation.²⁷ The second entitled 'The Project to Rescue Chinese Folk Cultural Heritages (Zhongguo minjian wenhua yichan qiangjiu gongcheng 中國民間文化遺產搶救工程)', established in 2002, sought to document surviving historical *nianhua* from significant collections mostly from China. Issued under the series title *Zhongguo Muban Nianhua Jicheng* (*Integrated Collections of Chinese Woodblock Nianhua*), each of the 21 volumes focuses on a specific area of sheet-print production or collection.²⁸ While the main focus has continued to be on the auspicious pictures associated with *nianhua*, a more inclusive approach has been adopted: apart from the usual classification print type and identification of subject-matter, discussions of aesthetic values, i.e. colour, line or form have also been included.²⁹ For the first time in compilations of this nature, prints from Shanghai have been included as a separate category deserving of its own volume.³⁰ The examples in the volume suggest that sheet print production in Shanghai was more urban and secular, and as I shall argue in the context of the victory pictures, more connected to other forms of print and

²⁶ 'Intangible Heritage', UNESCO, <http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?pg=00002> (accessed 5 September 2012).

²⁷ Feng Jicai (series ed.), *Zhongguo muban nianhua chuanchengren koushushi congshu* 中国木版年画传承人口述丛书, 14 vols, Tianjin: Tianjin Daxue Chubanshe, 2010.

²⁸ Feng Jicai (series ed.), *Zhongguo muban nianhua jicheng* 中国木版年画集成, 21 vols, Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju.

²⁹ See Feng Jicai's general introduction 'Zhongguo muban nianhua de jiazhi ji pucha he yiyi 中国木版年画的价值及普查的意义', all vols, *Zhongguo muban nianhua jicheng*, pp. 003-005. Ellen Johnston Laing was the first to adopt this aesthetic approach in the study of *nianhua*, see *Art and Aesthetics in Chinese Popular Prints: Selections from the Muban Foundation Collection*, Ann Arbor: Center for Chinese Studies, University of Michigan, 2002.

³⁰ Feng Jicai (ed.), *Zhongguo muban nianhua jicheng — Shanghai Xiaoxiaochang juan* 中国木板年画集成——上海小校场卷, Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 2011. Usually the Shanghai and Taohuawu prints are discussed as a group because of commonalities in craftsman, shops and distributors (see discussion in Epilogue).

mass media. Here, the depictions of war have been categorized as *shishi hua* 時事畫 (Pictures of Current Events).

In a little over a century, the understanding of the pictorial print and, in particular, the sheet or popular print has been continuously shifting, used in the service of ideology or other timely cultural regimes — we still do not understand the prints for themselves. Thus, one of the objectives of this thesis is to re-contextualize these victory-picture prints through close reading, removing some of the historical and ideological biases that has burdened their scholarship.

3. The Subject: *Wen over Wu*

The seeming absence of representations of war and conflict from the visual and literary cultures of imperial China can perhaps be attributed to the view that violence did not appear to have a visible role in society. Notwithstanding that dynasties rose and fell through acts of violence, there has been a lack of systematic study on the place of violence in Chinese culture.³¹ The subject of violence has rarely been independently examined; in fact, discourse has often been positioned within the binary pairing of *wen* 文 and *wu* 武 (civil versus military; harmony versus violence). From the viewpoint that both *wen* and *wu* are the preserve of the elite, there is generally a view that there was an ‘amilitarist turn’ at two points in Chinese history: first, from about the 5th century BCE when there was a move away from martial violence to refinement, and sanctioned violence became less essential to the definition of elite identity³²; second, when the civilian ideal triumphed over the military ideal in the Song period (960-1279), with the rise of the examination system and civilian institutional control over military power.³³ As the military historian Kenneth Swope has observed, ‘there was a lengthy and sustained tradition of anti militarism perpetuated by the civilian elites who did the vast majority of the historical record keeping’.³⁴

The impression of the Chinese preference for an ‘amilitarized’ or ‘demilitarized’ culture (*wu bing wenhua* 無兵文化) was bolstered by political and

³¹ Barend J. ter Haar, ‘Rethinking “Violence” in Chinese Culture’, in Göran Aijmer and Jon Abbink (eds), *Meanings of Violence: A Cross Cultural Perspective*, Oxford and New York: Berg, 2000, pp. 123-40.

³² See Mark Edward Lewis, *Sanctioned Violence in Early China*, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990.

³³ Ter Haar, p. 124.

³⁴ Kenneth Swope, ‘Introduction’, in *Warfare in China since 1600*, Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2005, p. xii.

current events of the 19th and early 20th century. *Wu bing wenhua* was a term that gained currency in the late imperial period and early 20th century, used by reformists, Western commentators and Republican period historians to explain why China was backward and unable to withstand imperialist attacks. The historian Lei Haizong 雷海宗 (1902-62) in his influential 1939 work *Zhongguo wenhua yu Zhongguo de bing* 中國文化與中國的兵 (*Chinese Culture and China's Military*) defines the term, using it to convey the view of 'an enervated China whose ability to fight had been sapped by centuries of Confucian culture'.³⁵ Taking his cue from this train of thought, John K. Fairbank authoritatively declared: 'The resort to *wu* was an admission of bankruptcy in the pursuit of *wen*.'³⁶ It was believed that order could be maintained through indoctrination by education and a system of reward and punishment; violence was abhorred and looked upon as a last resort. Save for an exceptional few, when an emperor looked to using military force, it was an admission that he had failed in his role as a sage in pursuit of the art of government. During the Ming period, it appeared as if the tradition preferred a defensive posture rather than an offensive one. For example, 'the expansion of territory is not the way of enduring peace, and the overburdening of people is a cause of unrest' was an oft-quoted aphorism.³⁷

Art historians of the Fairbank generation also noticed the absence of such subject-matter and also attributed it to the triumph of *wen* over *wu*. Alexander Soper noted that while the painting of combat was frequent in the Six Dynasties period (420-589), there were almost no references in standard accounts of the Tang (618-907), Five Dynasties (907-960) and Song (960-1279) periods. He suggested that this had been suppressed under the influence of the Confucian ideal with its tangle of moral and aesthetic implications and that the decline in themes of actual or suggested violence was 'the most conspicuous aspect of a process that

³⁵ Nicola di Cosmo, 'Introduction', in di Cosmo (ed.), *Military Culture in Imperial China*, Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 2009, pp. 1-2; Lei Haizong, *Zhongguo wenhua yu Zhongguo de bing*, Beijing: Shangwu Yinshuguan, 2001 (first published 1939). For a succinct description of the contemporary events that prompted Lei's thinking, see Swope, 2005, pp. xi-xiii.

³⁶ John K. Fairbank. 'Varieties of the Chinese Military Experience', in Frank A. Kierman, Jr. and Fairbank, eds, *Chinese Ways in Warfare*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1974, p. 7.

³⁷ Lo Jung-pang, 'Ming Policy Formulation and Decision-making on Issues Respecting Peace and War', in Charles O. Hucker, ed., *Chinese Government in Ming Times: Seven Studies*, New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1969, p. 51.

ended by depriving all figure painting in China of any serious hold on emotions'.³⁸ James Cahill in exploring the aesthetic implications has linked this oversight to the diversion of interest from the imagery of the painting to its making and the maker. A cultivated artist, as opposed to an artisan painter would limit his subject-matter to harmonious themes which reflected his own rich but stable inner life and did not challenge the order of the Confucian ideal.³⁹

More recently, interdisciplinary studies interested in warfare, military culture and violence have begun to explore the implications of this literati bias and shift away from the framework of the *wen-wu* dichotomy.⁴⁰ For example, the AAS Annual Meeting in 2000 convened a session entitled 'Martial Art: Strategic Deployment of Wen and Wu in Chinese Painting Practice' with the intention of establishing dialogue between the subfields of Chinese military history and Chinese art history. Papers by Jennifer Purtle, Kathleen Ryor, Nixi Cura and Hongxing Zhang questioned long-held suppositions about the rigidities of social status and literati identity, thus opening up an examination of the impact of military men on cultural production as artists, patrons, collectors and connoisseurs.⁴¹ Nevertheless, the approach of the panel continued to be centred on the act of painting as an elite activity and the elite cultural practices of the artists. As explained in greater detail in Chapter 1, the visual aspects of imagery related to martial elements and the conduct of war are often sidestepped and remain largely unexplored.

³⁸ Alexander Soper, *Textual Evidence for the Secular Arts of China in the Period from Liu Sung through Sui*, Ascona: Artibus Asiae Publishers, 1967, pp. 65-68.

³⁹ James Cahill, *The Painter's Practice: How Artists Lived and Worked in Traditional China*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1994, p. 115.

⁴⁰ Apart from Di Cosmo, 2009, see Hans van der Ven (ed.), *Warfare in Chinese History*, Leiden: Brill, 2000; David A. Graff and Robin Higham, *A Military History of China*, Boulder: Westview Press, 2002; Peter Lorge, *War, Politics and Society in Early Modern China 900-1795*, New York: Routledge, 2005; Peter C. Perdue, *China Marches West: The Qing Conquest of Central Eurasia, 1680-1760*, Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press; special issue *War and Society* 18.2, October 2000; special issue 'War in Modern China', *Modern Asian Studies* 30.4, 1996.

⁴¹ See <http://www.asian-studies.org/absts/2000abst/China/C-64.htm> (accessed 24 February 2011). For the Ming period, Kathleen Ryor examined the relationship between Xu Wei, a painter and writer who was also a military strategist, and the leading generals of his day. The fluidity of social boundaries between the civil and military spheres ensured that many military officials engaged in the practices of poetry, calligraphy and painting, while literati immersed themselves in the symbolic and emblematic aspects of martial life like sword collection (see 'Regulating the *Qi* and the *Xin*: Xu Wei and His Military Patrons', in *Archives of Asian Art* 54, 2003, pp. 23-33; 'Wen and Wu in Elite Cultural Practices during the Late Ming Period', in di Cosmo, 2009, pp. 219-42.).

The enduring view that there was a lack of interest in military affairs was partially derived from mid-19th century Western commentators who thought that this was the reason for China's backwardness and inability to stand up to imperialist attack. Scholarly consensus, bolstered by the intellectual and political authority of Chinese historiography in the Republican era, tended to regard the Manchus as alien rulers who completely assimilated and gradually lapsed in to decline. However, until the rise of studies in the 'New Qing History' in the last decade, militarization and ethnicity were two very significant aspects of Manchu rule that were largely overlooked.⁴² Research in these areas has led to paradigm shifts in the understanding of the Qing period and revealed the extent to which its emperors had utilized martial values to sustain the imperial hegemony and to promote an idealized Manchu identity: they had in effect militarized culture and society.⁴³

4. Intertextuality: Word over image

The discussions in the preceding sections have demonstrated how prints have been obscured by cultural beliefs, political ideology, texts and word-based studies. Where then should the depictions of these 19th century wars and their intertextuality lie? Many publications on the visuality of these wars, especially the Sino-French War in 1884, have centred on depictions in the European press; the illustrations in the groundbreaking Chinese pictorial *Dianshizhai huabao*, its relation to *Shenbao*, a sister publication and the 'modern' newspaper, and their role in the emergence of public opinion in China.⁴⁴ However, this puts an emphasis on a reading public rather than a seeing public. Within this framework, victory pictures, as both subject and object, are located vis-à-vis the globalizing context of Western imperialism in Asia and the implications of modernity found in the adoption of Western technology. In our urgency to identify them as

⁴² See Joanna Waley-Cohen, 'The New Qing History', *Radical History Review* 88 (2004):193-206.

⁴³ See Evelyn S. Rawski, *The Last Emperors: A Social History of Qing Imperial Institutions*, Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1998; Pamela Kyle Crossley, *A Translucent Mirror: History and Identity in Qing Imperial Ideology*, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1999; Perdue, 2005; Joanna Waley-Cohen, *The Culture of War in China: Empire and Military under the Qing Dynasty*, London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2006.

⁴⁴ See Wagner, Rudolf (ed). *Joining the Global Public: Word, Image, and City in Early Chinese Newspapers, 1870-1910*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2007; Barbara Mittler, *Newspaper for China? Power, Identity and Change in Shanghai's News Media (1872-1912)*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press (Asia Monographs Series 226), 2004; Joan Judge, *Print and Politics: 'Shibao' and the Culture of Reform in Late Qing China*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996.

progressive, they have become identified with news and as an instrument of propaganda.⁴⁵ Sometimes it appears as if images were found to fit the written word. Would an examination of the intrinsic meaning sited within an image and its relationship to other images and objects tell us something different?

II. Approaches and Problems in History and Art History

The term 'history of images' was first raised by Ivan Gaskell in 1991.⁴⁶ As the use of imagery became more widespread in the following decade, the cultural historian Peter Burke explored the advantages and pitfalls of engaging in pictorial matter.⁴⁷ In order to use the evidence of images effectively, Burke cautions that it is necessary to be aware of their weaknesses: 'Images are mute witnesses.... They may have been intended to communicate a message of their own, but historians not infrequently ignore it in order to read pictures "between the lines", and learn something that the artists did not know they were teaching.'⁴⁸

In East Asian studies, these problems of how images are contextualized, perceived and received by its audiences is well highlighted in the controversy created by a single woodblock print posted on the MIT 'Visualizing Cultures' website.⁴⁹ Launched in 2002, the large-scale project entitled 'Visualizing Cultures—Image Driven Scholarship' was launched at MIT in 2002 with the remit to 'use new technology and hitherto inaccessible visual materials to reconstruct the past as people of the time visualized the world (or imagined it to be)'.⁵⁰ After a link to the website had been posted on the MIT homepage in April 2006, the unit entitled 'Throwing off Asia' written by John Dower and a Japanese print depicting the decapitation of 'violent' Chinese soldiers during the Sino-Japanese War invited ire and prompted allegations of racism from Chinese internet users and students at the MIT. It led to a temporary shutdown of the website and a tense confrontation between faculty and students. Eventually the website was restored

⁴⁵ See Wagner, p. 123. He calls them as *xinwenzhi*, popular newsprint. This identification may be problematic as other historians have tried to distinguish between the two (Elliot, J., pp. 225-26fn).

⁴⁶ Ivan Gaskell, 'Visual History' in, Peter Burke ed.), *New Perspectives in Historical Writing*.

Cambridge: Polity, 1991 (second edition, 2001), pp. 187-217.

⁴⁷ Peter Burke, *Eyewitnessing: The Use of Images as Historical Evidence*, London: Reaktion Books, 2001.

⁴⁸ Burke, pp. 14-16.

⁴⁹ Peter Monaghan, 'Sino-Japanese War Image on MIT website stirs complaints', *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 1 May 2006.

⁵⁰ <http://ocw.mit.edu/ans7870/21f/21f.027/home/index.html> (accessed 10 September 2012).

with a warning about the disturbing nature of the illustrations.⁵¹ Reflective articles were written in the aftermath of the controversy, by Peter Perdue and Benjamin Elman, raising issues on the role of institutions in education and research, China's place in the world and the impact of historical and cultural memory.⁵² Thus, the conscious need to straddle history and historiography, past and present, as well as old (print) and new (digital) media are undercurrents (meta-texts) that run through and frame this dissertation. Moreover, the material and issues surrounding the controversy are also directly relevant to my research. Woodblock prints such as those employed by Dower are discussed in comparison to Chinese counterparts in Chapter 4, which also examines how images are copied, circulated, serialized, 'quoted' and subverted.

More significantly, perhaps, is how the material that forms the basis of this dissertation can engage in issues that are central to art history, and make a stand for the contribution of skills offered by the discipline in an age of inter-disciplinarity. By examining how the victory picture as a genre developed from the High Qing to the late Qing period in Chapters 1 to 3, questions related to the development of period style, meaning, the history of ideas, concepts of criticism and changes in society are addressed. As these prints had a wide wider audience than painting, and interacted between the elite and the popular spheres, more complex questions about representation, convention, medium, production, interpretation and reception can be raised.⁵³ Ultimately, the research questions posed can be summarised as follows: How were these prints conceived, manufactured and appropriated for use? Did they engender rather than merely reflect social, cultural and political meanings, and if so, how? To what extent can their appearance both as pictures and as an object impact how they are read?

III. Methodology

The methodology used for textual analysis has largely been adapted here; pictures like text can be taken heuristically as a 'configuration of signs which is

⁵¹ http://ocw.mit.edu/ans7870/21f/21f.027/throwing_off_asia_02/toa_vis_01.html (accessed 10 September 2012).

⁵² Peter C. Perdue, 'Reflections on the "Visualizing Cultures" Incident' (<http://web.mit.edu/fnl/volume/185/perdue.html>, accessed 10 September 2012); Benjamin A Elman, 'Teaching Through the MIT "Visualizing Cultures Controversy" in Spring 2006' (http://cbcs.km.nccu.edu.tw/webfolder/Newsletter2_2/2009050101.pdf, accessed 10 September 2012).

⁵³ As highlighted in Elkins, 1995, pp. 552-53.

coherently interpretable by some community of users'.⁵⁴ Beginning from within the print itself, the analysis examines order from looking at formal elements like the pictorial material in relation to the text, the format, the schematization and the compositional units of the work. Looking outwards, the focus then moves away from seeing the print as mere object and from the viewpoint of both the creator and audience, questions why the object exists and why it takes the form it does.⁵⁵ In so doing, this looks to 'historicism' which sites the artefact within a cultural context and enables interpretation in socially and historically meaningful terms. It enables examination of the artefact as an instrument of social power and also allows for the examination of a relationship between political and economic conditions and the processes of textual production.⁵⁶

To summarize, the approach adapted in Chapters 1 and 2 lies mid-way between formalism, which looks at forms, devices, and constructions of 'closed' works, and sociology, which dwells on the larger-scale fields of production, distribution and reception.⁵⁷ Chapter 1, 'From Hunting to Touring', explores how victory pictures developed as a distinct genre in the imperial milieu with the use of stock narratives, pictorial formats, compositional units and specific motifs. However, it is the account of how the Qing government developed victory as a paradigm provides the context for defining the victory picture as a 'complete, interpretively coherent' object.⁵⁸ Chapter 2, 'The Sino-French War: A Very Public War', follows a similar approach and examines the position of the victory picture in popular culture and constructions of modernity within the treaty-port environment.

Chapter 3, 'A New Iconography of War: The Maritime Challenge', addresses issues of textual typology. It examines how as the theatre of war shifted from land to sea, the iconography of the victory picture was transformed by the rise of naval warfare and the growing awareness that the source of national power lay with the sea. Chapter 4, 'Repetition, Seriality and Comparative Nationalisms' addresses issues relevant to textual analysis in critical theory. Using prints from the Sino-

⁵⁴ W.F. Hanks, 'Text and Textuality', *Annual Review of Anthropology* 18 (1989), p. 95.

⁵⁵ Michael Baxandall, *Patterns of Intention: On the Historical Explanation of Pictures*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1985, p. 26.

⁵⁶ Hanks, 1989, pp. 98, 112, 118-19.

⁵⁷ Hanks, p. 100

⁵⁸ Hanks, p. 98.

French and Sino-Japanese wars, and the Boxer Rebellion, this chapter examines how images or motifs circulate over time and space through appropriation, quotation and subversion. In addressing the issues raised in the 'Visualizing Cultures' controversy, it also looks at the 'comparative nationalisms' generated by China and Japan during the 1895 war.⁵⁹ The theoretical frameworks explored in this chapter are distinguished by their quality of being 'unbounded', i.e., the discourse has shifted from the confines of the text (read print or picture here) to a process of interaction between the object, the audience and the creator.⁶⁰

Finally the section entitled 'Print Production and Distribution' in the Epilogue attempts to map the popular print market through rubric in the victory-picture prints. As this was a business producing primarily ephemera and on a rather small-scale, written records were rare and accounts to date have been written relying on traditional suppositions and oral histories and through extrapolation from other contemporary accounts that vouch for proximity to raw materials, access to markets and familial and kinship traditions.⁶¹ However, unlike other sheet prints, the wealth of rubric about printmakers, distributors, areas of print distribution, possible illustrators or calligraphers and marketing devices, distinguish victory-picture prints. While these were instructional to the original intended audience about how to read the print, they also allow for a more complex and nuanced understanding of how the print market operated.

⁵⁹ Benedict Anderson. *The Spectre of Comparisons: Nationalism, Southeast Asia, and the World*. London and New York: Verso, 1998.

⁶⁰ Hanks, p. 99 and Anderson, pp. 29-35.

⁶¹ This approach has been utilized in studies of booksellers (see Laurence Fontaine, translated by Vicki Whittaker, *History of Pedlars in Europe*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 1996, pp. 50-72). It is discussed in the context of China by Roger Chartier in 'Gutenberg Revisited from the East', *Late Imperial China* 17, no. 1 (1996): 1-9.

CHAPTER ONE

FROM HUNTING TO TOURING: VISUALIZING VICTORY IN QING MILITARY CULTURE

There can be no doubt how much the Qing emperors, in particular, Qianlong, laid store by their martial achievements. In 1792, towards the end of his long reign, Qianlong styled himself Shiquan Laoren 十全老人 (The Old Man of Ten Complete Victories). The appellation refers to three campaigns undertaken in Turkestan against the Zunghars, the Ili and the Muslims (1755-59), two against the Jinchuan minority in Sichuan province (1747-49, 1771-76), in Burma (1766-70), Annam (1788-89) and Taiwan (1787-88), and two in Nepal (1790-92). In his lifetime, the Qing empire was indeed the most extensive ruled from Beijing. In addition to China proper, it included the Manchu's northeastern homelands, present-day Inner Mongolia and Mongolia, Qinghai, Xinjiang and Tibet. He was absorbed by the question of how history would judge Manchu rule; in his preface to *Kaiguo fanglue* 開國方略, an account of the Qing conquest of China, he noted that the retelling of late Ming and Manchu history would show the latter's rule to have been 'more glorious than the achievements of the Han and Ming, not to mention Tang and Song'.⁶² This chapter explores the military culture in the High Qing period that fostered the emergence of the victory picture (*desheng tu* 得勝圖, *zhangong tu* 戰功圖) as a clearly defined pictorial genre.

I. Visualising the martial in early modern China

It was not as if pictures depicting the activities of war or celebrating military victory had not existed before this but perhaps because of the sinocentric, literati bias in the historiography of China, the Ming dynasty (1368-1644) was seen through most of the 20th century as 'civilized' and Chinese, diametrically opposed to the war-like and foreign Qing. As scholars like Craig Clunas observed, the Ming's 'immense level of engagement with, and attention to the violent aspects of power has become largely culturally invisible'.⁶³ He further asserts that 'the imagery of war and victory was a crucial, if now totally lost, part of early Ming

⁶² R. Kent Guy, *The Emperor's Four Treasuries: Scholars and the State in the late Qianlong Era*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 1987, p. 164.

⁶³ Craig Clunas, *Empire of Great Brightness: Visual and Material Cultures of Ming China, 1368-1644*, London and Honolulu: Reaktion, 2007, p. 106.

state art'.⁶⁴ Even if they seem scant and dispersed, textual records and survivals from the period depicting both historical and contemporary battles and military figures, are now receiving attention.⁶⁵ More recently, there is a growing awareness of the extent of militarization in the Ming dynasty, and in art history, the role of elite members of the hereditary military class as patrons of cultural and material production is now receiving attention.⁶⁶

Many works depicting military subjects appear to have been connected to ritual and cultic practices through all levels of society from emperor to villager. The founding Ming emperor Hongwu (r. 1368-98) was said to have ordered paintings depicting the deeds of his loyal officials for display in the Temple of Meritorious Officials in Jilongshan, or asked for the likenesses of fallen comrades to be sculpted for their shrines.⁶⁷ As cult worship of Guan Yu (Guandi; 165-220), the Three Kingdoms period general, became increasingly popular, he was co-opted as part of the state pantheon. It is in this light that Oliver Moore interprets *Guan Yu Captures a General*, a monumental (200 x 237 cm) but undocumented painting by the court artist Shang Xi 商喜 (d. before 1450) in the Palace Museum, Beijing.⁶⁸ He demonstrates how the painting in its composition was related to temple murals that the artist had painted on the same subject as well to the ceremony of 'offering prisoners' that took place within the palace. Wang Bomin recorded the existence of a monumental hanging scroll (200 x 200 cm) depicting how the people of Taiping County, Zhejiang province, repelled an attack by the Japanese 'dwarf bandits' who terrorized the prosperous South China coast in the mid-16th century.⁶⁹ The county gazetteer of the Jiajing period (1522-67) records that the work was painted by a well-known folk painter known as Zhou Shilong to commemorate the victory of the people over these pirates and the miraculous

⁶⁴ Clunas, 2007, p. 165.

⁶⁵ Ma Ya-chen Ma, 'Zhan xun yu huan ji: Mingdai zhanzheng xiangguan tuxiang yu guanyuan shijue wenhua (Military Achievement and Official Accomplishment: Ming Images of Warfare and the Visual Culture of Officialdom)', *Ming dai yanjiu*, No.17 (2011/12), pp. 49-89.

⁶⁶ See Kathleen Ryor, 'Wen and Wu in Elite Cultural Practices during the Late Ming Period', in Nicola di Cosmo, ed., *Military Culture in Imperial China*, 2009, pp. 219-42; Kathleen Ryor, 'Regulating the *Qi* and the *Xin*: Xu Wei and His Military Patrons', in *Archives of Asian Art* 54, 2003, pp. 23-33; Kathlyn Maureen Lisomb, 'Social Status and Art Collecting: The Collections of Shen Zhou and Wang Zhen', *Art Bulletin* 78.1 (March), 1996, pp. 111-36.

⁶⁷ Ibid., pp. 165-66.

⁶⁸ Oliver Moore, 'Violence Un-scrolled: Cultic and Ritual Emphasis in Painting Guan Yu', in *Arts Asiatiques* 58 (2003), pp. 86-97.

⁶⁹ Wang Bomin, 'Mingdai minjian jiechu lishi hua "Taiping Kangwo tu"', in *Wenwu* 1959:5, pp. 40-41.

appearance of Guandi, the God of War in their time of need. The painting was stored at the local Guandi temple and brought out on local feast days.⁷⁰

Several extant paintings depicting military activities appear to have been created for imperial patrons and had a documentary function.⁷¹ These include a long handscroll depicting the Prince of Qiyang's victory over Tibetan tribes in Gansu province in 1575; a pair of processional scrolls depicting a Ming emperor's progress to and from his ancestral tombs (**Fig. 1.1**), and a painting by Shang Xi of the Xuande emperor (r. 1425-35) on a hunt (**Fig. 1.2**).⁷² Together, these works suggest that Ming emperors like their Qing counterparts possessed an awareness of how the display of military panoply (i.e. the violent imagery of state) and the practise of related pursuits contributed to the spectacle of monarchy and its ability to exercise power.

In less rarefied circles, there was interest in depicting martial victory and its attending virtues and values but their enduring popularity seemed to have been linked to fictional episodes in epics like the *Sanguo Yanyi* 三國演義 (*Romance of the Three Kingdoms*) and *Shuihu Zhuan* 水滸傳 (*Outlaws of the Marshes*). The spread of woodblock printing and the rise of book illustration widened the circulation of images in the 16th and 17th centuries. 'Anti-heroes' were celebrated in publications like the 1669 *Lingyan ge*, which presented 24 vassals of the Tang as 'bandits'. The 'gallery of heroes' format was to have a lasting impact. Anne Burkus-Chasson argues that the book is an embodiment of the historical moment and represents an 'interface' between the manuscript and the printed book.⁷³ The tension between image and text is evident in other contemporary texts like *Jiaozei tu ji* 剿賊圖記 (*Illustrated Account of the Suppression of Rebels*) by Yuan Mo 元默 (1582-1635), the Grand Coordinator of a disastrous campaign to pacify an uprising in Henan in 1633-35. The prominence of the word *tu* (picture) in the

⁷⁰ Ibid. Wang himself corroborates the gazetteer's account and recalls seeing the painting in his youth; during the Sino-Japanese War, it was always hung up in the temple on feast days between the 13th and 15th of May.

⁷¹ Clunas, 2007, p. 161.

⁷² See National Museum of History, *A Journey Into China's Antiquity, IV, Yuan Dynasty, Ming Dynasty, Qing Dynasty*, Beijing: Morning Glory Publishers, 1997, pp. 60-63; Na Chih-liang, *The Emperor's Procession: Two Scrolls of the Ming Dynasty*, Taipei: Guoli Gugong Bowuyuan, 1969 and Clunas, 2007, p. 161.

⁷³ See Anne Burkus-Chasson, *Through a Forest of Chancellors: Fugitive Histories in Liu Yuan's Lingyan ge, an Illustrated Book from Seventeenth-Century Suzhou*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center for the Harvard-Yenching Institute, 2009.

title implies that the illustrations were a selling point but the volume's subsequent relevance as a source of information for the Qing period historians like the compilers of the official *Ming History* (*Ming shi* 明史) underscores the primacy of the text.⁷⁴ Published posthumously in the early Qing period, the account is accompanied by 24 illustrations (**Figs 1.3a and b**). Although said to be creations of the famous Anhui engravers, the renditions are simplistic and formulaic, seeming more like diagrams than pictures (Fig. 1.3a). Nevertheless, there were instances in which pictorial conventions effectively enhanced the text. *Rebels Crossing the Yellow River on the Ice* depicts movements during the abnormally cold winter of 1633-34 when Ming troops watched helplessly as rebels broke siege at the Wu'an Mountains and crossed the Yellow River that had frozen solid towards Kaifeng (Fig. 1.3b). The human presence is barely notable save for a few rebels determinedly crossing the slippery ice on the lower right corner. The visual impact lies in the rendering of the river as stylized crackles that overwhelm pictorial plane — like a metaphor for the inroads rebel bands made on a largely immobile military bureaucracy.

II. Visual and Military Culture in the High Qing

I take as the starting point the perspectives posited by proponents of the 'New Qing History' that seek to explain the Manchus as empire builders who ruled over vast territories occupied by subjects of different ethnicities.⁷⁵ Beyond the actual conduct of war, military success and the martial values that underpinned it were propelled on to the centre stage of cultural life in the Qing period.⁷⁶ Research in military culture and issues of ethnicity has led to paradigm shifts in understanding the extent to which the Qing emperors had utilized martial values to sustain the imperial hegemony and to promote an idealized Manchu identity: they had in effect militarized culture and society.⁷⁷ The term 'military culture' can be viewed from multiple aspects that include codes of conduct and behaviour,

⁷⁴ There are copies of the *Jiaozei tuji* in the National Library of China, Beijing and the Library of Congress, Washington, DC (for the latter see World Digital Library www.wdl.org/en/item/4445 and www.wdl.org/zh/item/4445, accessed 20-4-2011). See also Wu Weiye, *Suikou jilue* 綏寇紀略, 1674 and Roger V. Des Forges, *Cultural Centrality and Political Change in Chinese History: Northeast Henan in the Fall of the Ming*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003, pp. 182-93.

⁷⁵ See Rawski, 1998; Crossley, 1999; Mark C. Elliot, *The Manchu Way: The Eight Banners and Ethnic Identity in Late Imperial China*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001; Perdue, 2005; Waley-Cohen, 2006.

⁷⁶ Waley-Cohen, 2006, p. 1.

⁷⁷ See Joanna Waley-Cohen, 2004, pp. 193-206.

strategic processes in institutional behaviour and societal values.⁷⁸ However, for the purposes of the visual material discussed in this chapter, ‘military culture’ is understood from two perspectives: first, as a discrete, bounded system of rules and conventions as well as distinctive beliefs and symbols; secondly, ‘an aesthetic or literary tradition that values military events and raises the status of those who accomplish martial exploits to the level of heroes and demigods in epic cycles and poetry, visual representations, communal representations, and state rituals’.⁷⁹

While martial visual culture manifested itself in various forms, some less ephemeral and more visible than others, at different social levels, and through a wide range of media and spaces, this section concentrates on works from the imperial milieu as I hope to demonstrate in the course of the wider discussion how victory pictures developed in the context of Qing imperial cultural production and painting. The focus is thus on works depicting Kangxi’s Southern inspection tours and Qianlong’s hunts, as well as material relating to rituals since these provided precedents for victory pictures in a number of ways, ranging from ‘software’ like pictorial elements and visual schema, to ‘hardware’ like the organizational infrastructure for massive programme painting projects. Cultural practices were used to convey the imagery of power and authority, represent symbolic ideals of kingship and enforce Manchu customs and cultural identity.⁸⁰ The intersection of performance and ritualization was thus crucial in making the Qing imperial order highly visible.

Since antiquity, the princely activities of hunting, touring and war-making have been inextricably linked. The etymology of the Chinese characters for tours of inspection, *xunshou* (巡狩) and *xunxing* (巡行) is derived from references to hunting from the Xia, Shang (1600-1028 BCE) and Western Zhou (1045-771 BCE) periods. For these early sage-kings who were themselves warriors, the practice of governing involved a continuous cycle of military campaigns, hunts and tours of inspection.⁸¹ In a more recent time, with the exception of the early Ming rulers, Hongwu and Yongle (r. 1402-24), these militarized activities were largely seen as ‘northern’ practices of the Liao (918-1125), Jin (1115-1234) and Yuan (1271-

⁷⁸ See Nicola di Cosmo’s discussion in ‘Introduction’, in di Cosmo, 2009, pp. 3-4.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ See Rawski, 1998, pp. 197-294; Waley-Cohen, 2006, pp. 66-88; Crossley, 1999.

⁸¹ Michael G. Chang, *A Court on Horseback: Imperial Touring & the Construction of Qing Rule, 1680-1785*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2007, pp. 38-40.

1368) dynasties and had by the 17th century become obscure. As Kangxi and Qianlong viewed themselves as martial rulers like their Inner Asian ancestors, the revival of hunts and tours in the Qing period was seen in both symbolic and practical terms: as celebration of conquest (called ‘opening the country’, kaiguo 開國) and rehearsals for war, enabling troops to be kept in a state of battle readiness (**Fig. 1.4**). Ample textual evidence exists — from edicts to diaries — to indicate that the hunt was ‘valorized’ as an ancestral institution and as a paradigm for touring.⁸²

For the young Kangxi, tours and military campaigns were seamlessly melded into hunts. He had planned his very first tour of inspection in 1671 like a military exercise: not only were military manoeuvres to be conducted but ritual protocols of the seasonal hunts were followed. Mukden (present-day Shenyang), the Manchu heartlands, was the final destination of the tour and the performance of the ancestral rites of reporting success was its justification. The 60-day progress was essentially a patrol of the northern frontier regions, and characterized by grand displays of military might. Kangxi visited with allied Mongol chieftains and his own officers, reviewed and showed off archery skills.⁸³ His touring intensified after the suppression of the Three Feudatories in 1681. In the early 1680s, numerous processions passed north of the Great Wall to hunt game. The emperor declared that hunts held twice a year were specifically military affairs no different from mobilizing troops. As an indication of the scale of these activities, up to 12,000 men were to take part practising their archery and equestrian skills.⁸⁴ The Kangxi emperor personally led four campaigns against the Zunghars in the 1690s with mixed results. The departure for his second campaign against the Zunghars was preceded by a hunt that had been laid out like a military campaign, and he set out on his third campaign on the pretext of going hunting in the Ordos region. And because of the fruitless conclusion of

⁸² Chang, pp. 75-77. Official diarists, who followed the emperor on the road, recording his words and deeds contributed to this wealth of information. The Office of the Imperial Diaries (Qijuzhu guan) was set up shortly before the first Inspection Tour departed in 1671. The keeping of diaries ensured that the emperor was not seen as hunting for leisure and that protocol had been adhered to.

⁸³ *Kangxi Qijuzhu* 1:3-6; Chang, pp. 78-79

⁸⁴ *Kangxi Qijuzhu* 2:923-27; Chang, pp. 83-84

his 4th campaign, the 19 days spent by the emperor in Ningxia resembled an imperial tour of inspection.⁸⁵

1. The Travelling Emperor's Picture Show

However, it is Kangxi's inspection tours of the south that is imposed on the cultural memories of his reign. He conducted six tours in the Yangzi delta — 1684, 1689, 1699, 1703, 1705 and 1707 — the Han cultural heartland and the economic hub of the empire. The first two are commemorated in painting: *Kangxi Southern Inspection Tour* (*Kangxi nanxun tu* 康熙南巡圖) is a massive work by a team of artists led by Wang Hui (王翬, 1662-1717) comprising 12 handscrolls that stretch over more than 200 metres of pictorial space.⁸⁶ It is significant as the first major painting project associated with Kangxi.⁸⁷ Work on the *Nanxun tu* began in the early 1690s and took eight years, probably coinciding with beginning and conclusion of the military campaigns that Kangxi personally led against Zungharia. The *Nanxun tu* is the earliest example of imagery in early modern China that explicitly links martial practices to hunting and touring that is corroborated by textual accounts (**Fig. 1.5, Scroll 1**). Known for his adherence to classical (orthodox) models, it would not have been surprising if Wang Hui had used as his models Ming period works that had remained in the Forbidden City after the dynasty's fall. Striking comparisons can be made between the *Nanxun tu* and a set of Ming processional scrolls depicting a Ming emperor's progress to and from ancestral tombs (*chuxing tu* 出行圖; see Fig. 1.1).⁸⁸ Both have in common a left-to-right narrative schema that Maxwell Hearn has identified as an archetype that has precedents as far back as the Han dynasty.⁸⁹ The orderly ranks of

⁸⁵ For an account of Kangxi's campaigns, see Perdue, 2005, pp. 138-208.

⁸⁶ For a complete tally, see Table in Maxwell Kessler Hearn, 'The "Kangxi Southern Inspection Tour": A Narrative Program by Wang Hui', PhD thesis, Princeton, 1990, p. 66. Today the set is dispersed in museum collections in Beijing, Paris, New York, Alberta and Phoenix. One scroll is incomplete and another survives only in draft format.

⁸⁷ Although it is not clear if Kangxi directly commissioned the work since official accounts and edicts are silent on this. Two senior officials Wang Shan (1645-1728) and Song Junye (c. 1662-1713) are generally thought to be the motivators behind the project that was carried out under Kangxi's auspices. (Hearn, 1990, pp. 55-59). He was less prolific than his grandson in generating painting projects of scale and sponsored only two others works: *Illustrations of Agriculture and Sericulture* (*Gengzhi tu*) and *Kangxi Emperor's 60th Birthday Celebrations* (*Kangxi liuxun wanshou qingdian tu*).

⁸⁸ See Na Chih-liang, 1969. From the Qianlong reign onwards, the scrolls were according to palace archives kept at the Nanxundian (South Fragrance Hall), an inner-palace repository in the Forbidden City that housed imperial portraits from previous dynasties. They are also discussed in *Shiqu Baoji* and *Nanxun Tuxiang kao*, both catalogues of the Qing imperial painting collection (Na, pp. 127-30).

⁸⁹ Hearn, 1990, pp. 78-81.

soldiers, officials and servants in splendid regalia and the careful and correct rendition of weapons and paraphernalia that relate historically to the act of going to war. Aided by the format of the handscroll, the act of unrolling would have revealed a continuous mass marching through the landscape. Both works can be read as a depiction of practice and as representative of the iconographic, symbolic, aesthetic and pictorial components that fall under di Cosmo's definition of 'military culture'.

In the 1750s, Qianlong revived his grandfather's practice of inspection tours to the south. Like Kangxi, he also made a total of six journeys. At the conclusion of his first tour in 1751, Qianlong made plans for a similar series of 12 paintings to commemorate the event. The team of artists led by the Suzhou artist Xu Yang (act. c. 1750-after 75) began work in 1764 and completed the project in 1770, in time for the emperor's 60th birthday.⁹⁰ This later work is modelled on Wang Hui's but its aggrandized depiction of the emperor and curtailment of landscape details gave these scrolls the impression of being monoscenic.⁹¹ The *Qianlong Southern Inspection Tour* scrolls post-date the first victory pictures but are relevant as products of a fully functioning Qing imperial atelier.⁹² Xu Yang subsequently produced a set of victory pictures commemorating the two campaigns in Jinchuan.⁹³

2. Hunting for War

The hunts at Mulan were instituted by the Kangxi emperor in 1681, and he hunted there annually until his death. Following a lapse in the Yongzheng reign, the young Qianlong restored the imperial hunt in 1741. In the course of his reign he would visit the Mulan hunting grounds more than forty times.⁹⁴ The hunt was significant to the Manchus not least because it was an Inner Asian as opposed to Chinese ritual tradition, and was regarded as a martial (*wu*) counterpart to the

⁹⁰ Interestingly, Qianlong used his tours to the south to expand his cultural capital by dispensing 'extra-bureaucratic' forms of recognition to literati and artists in exchange for their work or services (see Chang, pp. 265-71). According to the *Suzhou Gazetteer* (*Suzhou fuzhi*), when the emperor met Xu Yang in 1751, he was rewarded with a bolt of silk and invited to the capital as a *jiansheng*. In 1753, he was awarded the *juren* degree and given the rank of Secretary in the Grand Secretariat.

⁹¹ See Maxwell K. Hearn, 'Document and Portrait: The Southern Inspection Tour Paintings of Kangxi and Qianlong', *Phoebus* 6:1 (1988), pp. 91-131.

⁹² For discussions on the existence and bureaucratic structure of the Qing imperial academy, see Yang Boda, *Qingdai yuanyuanhua*, Beijing: Zijincheng Chubanshe, 1993, pp. 7-57.

⁹³ See Nie Chongzheng (ed.), *Qingdai Gongting Huihua: Gugong Bowuyuan cang wenwu zhenpin quanji*, Hong Kong: Shangwu Yinshuguan, 1996, pp. 259-67.

⁹⁴ Waley-Cohen, 2006, p. 83.

civil (*wen*) rituals relating to agriculture.⁹⁵ More fundamentally, harking back to the Manchu's earliest nomadic origins, hunting was not only an economic activity that provided food and products for income, it was also a political one. The same skills were required for hunting and for war, and prowess brought leadership.⁹⁶

The Mulan hunt began formally with ceremonies in Beijing. On the day of departure, ancestral worship was performed where promises were made by the emperor and his entourage to never forget the 'old ways' and blessings were given by Tibetan lamas. Thereafter, the imperial progress would leave the capital taking with them the proper ritual implements.⁹⁷ Because of the logistics and manpower involved and its multivalent meanings to the emperor, participants in this ritual and the onlookers as the procession moved through the land, this was a theatre of power of Foucaultian proportions. Not surprisingly the annual hunt engendered an oeuvre of visual imagery classified as 'Mulan *tu*'.⁹⁸ Yang Boda has ascertained that there are at least 14 paintings depicting hunts in the collection of the Palace Museum in Beijing today.⁹⁹ The earliest Mulan paintings predate the victory pictures by about 15 years and, as such, I believe that they were a vital source of visual vocabulary and pictorial schema. While the best-known of the Mulan works is a set of four monumental handscrolls in the Musée Guimet completed around 1750, its 'frameless' format which was useful for simulating movement over space may have been less convenient for capturing the 'historical moment'.¹⁰⁰

Troating for Deer (Shaolu tu), by the Jesuit painter Giuseppe Castiglione (Lang Shining, 1688-1766) and other atelier painters, and dated to 1741, is a painting that had both historic meaning and personal sentiment for the emperor (**Fig. 1.6**). Measuring 267.5x319 cm, it is a *tieluo* (貼落) wall hanging, meant for

⁹⁵ Ning Chia, 'The Lifanyuan and the Inner Asian Rituals in the Early Qing (1644-1795)', *Late Imperial China* 14, no. 1 (June 1993), pp. 62, 69.

⁹⁶ Mark C. Elliot and Ning Chia, 'Manchus and the Hunt', in James Millward, Ruth Dunnell, Mark Elliott, and Philippe Foret (eds), *New Qing Imperial History: The Making of Inner Asian Empire at Qing Chengde*. London and New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004.

⁹⁷ Ibid, pp. 73-74; p. 82, f. 28, 29. *Qingdai huangjia lieyuan – Mulan weichang*, 4-5, 7; *Chengde fuzhi, juanshou* 1, 2, 3, 6 and 16-21 entitled *xundian* (travelling rituals).

⁹⁸ See Michele Pirazzoli-t'SerStevens and Hou Ching-lang, *Mulan tu yu Qianlong qiuji dalie zhi yanjiu*, Taipei: Guoli Gugong Bowuyuan, 1982.

⁹⁹ Yang, 1993, p. 102.

¹⁰⁰ In total the Guimet scrolls measure over 60 metres long. See Hong Kong Museum of Art & Musée Guimet, *From Beijing to Versailles: Artistic Relations between China and France*, exhibition catalogue, Hong Kong, 1997, cat. nos 115-18, pp. 294-99.

onstentatious display. This particular example commemorates Qianlong's first hunt in Mulan and from the presence of inscriptions added over a period of 33 years from 1749, 1753 and 1774, the painting evidently had continued visibility within the palace walls. Qianlong is depicted in the foreground followed by a retinue that winds its way through a narrow mountain path. The rocky outcrop that dominates the centre of the painting is suggestive of height and alludes to unseen depth and activity that lies beyond it. Flanked by isolated groups of soldiers interspersed between rock, the 'cells' of human activity give the illusion of a snaking line and of countless figures spilling over the horizon.

Scholars who have studied this painting take the view that the composition is based on a Chinese prototype. Howard Rogers has suggested that it is derived from *Emperor Minghuang's Flight to Shu*, a Tang composition that is now known only through Song and later examples.¹⁰¹ By comparing this painting with Shang Xi's *The Xuande Emperor on an Outing*, Dorothy Berinstein has suggested that Ming imperial paintings that were already in the palace were perhaps a more immediate model (see Fig. 1.1).¹⁰² Regardless of its source, this was a pictorial convention that was employed in victory pictures and discussed later in this chapter.

From the inscriptions, it is clear that the painting held associations of going to war for Qianlong. In the final inscription added in 1774, he memorializes participants in the hunt, now deceased, including Fu Heng (傅恒, d. 1770), a trusted advisor and general, was then a junior bodyguard. Fu Heng had supported Qianlong's campaign against the Zunghars in the 1750s and had led the victorious Jinchuan campaigns. He suffered a reversal of fortunes in Burma and, infected with malaria, returned to Beijing to die.¹⁰³ It is a poignant return to the painting: in 1774 the Jinchuan campaign had become costly and protracted and Manchu troops had actually fled the scene of battle in the Wang Lun rebellion. These defeats had elicited an edict from the emperor castigating the

¹⁰¹ Howard Rogers, 'For the Love of God: Castiglione at the Imperial Court', *Phoebus* 6:2 (1988), p.152.

¹⁰² Dorothy Berinstein, 'Hunts, Processions, and Telescopes: A Painting of an Imperial Hunt by Lang Shining (Giuseppe Castiglione)', *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics*, No. 35, Intercultural China (Spring, 1999), pp. 173-76.

¹⁰³ Arthur Hummel (ed.), *Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing Period*, 2 vols, Washington, DC, 1943-44), pp. 252-53.

Manchus for forgetting their military heritage and neglecting the traditional skills of archery and horsemanship.¹⁰⁴

At Mulan, the autumn hunts also followed a formalized and ritualized sequence of events which included displays of imperial archery by the emperor and his family, mock battles, the presentation of tributes by allied Mongol chieftains, horse races and wrestling as recorded in the Guimet's *Mulan tu*. Hunts also provided an opportunity for diplomacy: in 1754, Qianlong had met with Amursana, a claimant for the Zunghar khanate at the autumn hunt. *Horsemanship (Mashu tu)*, a *tieluo* completed in 1755 to commemorate this event.¹⁰⁵ Later that year, the painting was hung up in a gallery of battle at the Bishu Shanzhuang summer retreat to celebrate the capture of the Zunghar Khan, thus suggesting that paintings depicting the autumn hunt were also used to commemorate victory.¹⁰⁶

3. Ritual texts, performance and practice

The increasing significance of military rituals also contributed to the visibility of militarized culture. The Qing imperial order made rituals highly visible using them to convey the imagery of power and authority, represent symbolic ideals of kingship and enforce their customs and cultural identity.¹⁰⁷ Through publications, these practices were institutionalized. In the 1756 *Comprehensive Rites of the Qing (Da Qing tongli)*, military rituals occupied third place after auspicious and joyous rites, moved one up in this edition, with guest rituals and funerary rites falling behind. In 1766, *Illustrated Regulations and Models of Ritual Paraphernalia of our August Dynasty (Huangchao liqi tushi)*, armour and weapons were included under the title 'Military Preparedness' (wubei 武備). Grand Inspections (Dayue 大閱) were the first listed in the *Tongli*.¹⁰⁸ The attention to ritual generated a different category of illustration. Unlike the lyrical entourage that accompanied the emperor to and from hunts and inspection tours, an anonymous scroll of the Dayue with the troops and banner men extended over the pictorial space like a map, and accompanied by a colophon

¹⁰⁴ Guy, 1987, pp. 163-65.

¹⁰⁵ Yang Boda, 1993, pp. 211-25

¹⁰⁶ Ibid, and Nie, 1996, pp. 165-69.

¹⁰⁷ See Rawski, 1998, pp. 197-294; Waley-Cohen, 2006, pp. 66-88; Pamela Kyle Crossley, 1999.

¹⁰⁸ Waley-Cohen, 2006, pp. 67-70.

detailing the troop formations suggest that pictures were also made for instructional purposes (**Fig. 1.7**). Other rituals like the dispatch of generals to war, the welcome of a victorious army and the presentation and reception of captives were all absorbed within the visual narratives of victory.

III. Developing 'Victory' as a paradigm

After suppressing the Revolt of the Three Feudatories and securing Manchu rule in southeast China, the Kangxi emperor turned his attention northwest. His campaign to subdue the Zunghar marked the beginning of almost a century of conflict in the region. Kangxi would personally lead four expeditions with mixed results: the first two had resulted in hard-won victories at Ulan Batong in 1690 and at Jaomodo in 1696; the third, over the winter of 1696-97, proved to be inconclusive (appearing more like an imperial hunt in the Ordos region) and the fourth came to an abrupt end in Ningxia when news was received of the death of Galdan (1644-97), the emperor's nemesis.¹⁰⁹

Further campaigns which followed gained them the desert oases of Turfan and Hami (1715-17/18) and secured the allegiance of Tibet (1720) under the leadership of the emperor's son Prince Yinti (恂郡王胤禔; 1688-1756). When the Yongzheng emperor ascended the throne, he began a sustained reduction of troops from the northwest regions, fighting wars (which official histories subsequently downgraded to rebellion [*panluan* 叛亂]) in the Kokonor as they withdrew. For the next few years, Yongzheng relied on a fragile network of alliances and allegiances and internecine scrabbling among the various tribes and groups to maintain peace and Qing control of the northwest. In 1729, he took a more aggressive stance against Zungharia: peace was abandoned and the intention was to exterminate this recalcitrant state. In 1731, as Zunghar raids in Turfan intensified, the Qing armies began to march against them. The North Route Army was lured into a trap at Hoton Nor where they were besieged, resulting in the loss of 80 per cent of the Qing army. It took another two decades

¹⁰⁹ For a compelling and comprehensive account, see Perdue, 2005, pp. 152-208. Authoritative accounts like *Qinzheng Pingding Shuomo Fanglue* and the *Qing Shilu* only mention the emperor's participation in three 'successful' campaigns. By redating Galdan's death, the compilers were able to omit references to the last 'useless' campaign. These discrepancies were discovered in the late 20th century through comparison of the Chinese and Manchu editions of these histories as well as increasing access to archival materials (see for example, Perdue, 2005, pp. 203, 463-70; Okada Hidehiro, 'Galdan's Death: When and How', *Memoirs of the Research Department of the Toyo Bunko* 37 [1979], pp. 91-97).

and three campaigns before Yongzheng's successor, Qianlong, was able to decisively defeat Zungharia and complete the conquest of Turkestan in 1762.¹¹⁰

The campaigns were arduous and the supply systems were often crippled leaving the troops in perilous conditions. Although the Qing army suffered great reversals, their successes would provide a canvas upon which the concept of victory would be writ large. The campaigns played against a backdrop that resembled the Great Game of the 19th century. Parties fought over control of borders and trade caravans, the recognition of states, and access to natural resources like gold and horses.¹¹¹ Agrarian economies like Qing China and Muscovite Russia were pitted against nomadic Central Asian cultures over vast terrain that ranged from the deserts of Turfan to the snow-capped mountain ranges of Tibet, punctuated by internecine skirmishes between communities holding different religious affiliations. It provided rich material for the 'mythistory'¹¹² machine. Officials and compilers were able to situate the victories within the wider context of Chinese history, even going so far as to compare Kangxi with the Kings of Shang and Zhou.¹¹³

For the purposes of the ensuing discussion, one development is crucial to understanding how the victory picture emerged in Qing martial culture. The development of the literary genre of *fanglue* (方略), the military campaign history was vital in establishing a format for narrating war. An office for the compilation of these histories (*fanglue guan*) was established in 1682 to write a history of the Three Feudatories Revolt (*Pingding Sanni Fanglue*). Initially an *ad-hoc* division of the Grand Council, it had become a permanent institution by the mid-18th century. By the end of the Qing period, more than ten monumental (often bilingual) histories of this kind had been written.¹¹⁴

Although textual and visual evidence exists of works depicting the early Kangxi campaigns, they do not appear to serve the imperial agenda nor do they possess a cohesive visual schema like those of wars in the Qianlong reign. More

¹¹⁰ Perdue, 2005, pp. 227-55, 270-92; Chinese sources: Fu Heng, comp., *Pingding Zhungar Fanglue, jian, zheng; Da Qing Lichao Shilu (Gaozong)*.

¹¹¹ Peter C. Perdue, 'Boundaries, Maps and Movement: Chinese, Russian, and Mongolian empires in Early Modern Central Eurasia', in *The International History Review* xx, no. 2, June 1998, pp. 266-72.

¹¹² The idea of a history mingled with fables and tales (see Joseph Mali, *Mythistory: The Making of Modern Historiography*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003, pp. 8-9).

¹¹³ See *Qinzheng Pingding Shuomo Fanglue*, juan 25, Kangxi 35/5, *guiyou*

¹¹⁴ Guy, pp. 25-32, Perdue, 2005, pp. 463-70.

likely these were made for documentary or commemorative purposes by participants in the campaigns as exemplified by *Convoys of the Northern Campaign* (*Beizheng Duyun tu* 北征督運圖) in the collection of the National Museum of China (previously the National Museum of History).¹¹⁵

The illustrations in this 24-folio (now 19) album were made to accompany commentary written by Fan Chenglie 范承烈 on the facing page. Fan, the son of Fan Wencheng 范文程 (1597-1666), one of the founding statesmen of the Qing dynasty, had been among the officers entrusted with managing supplies for the West Route Army. Dated to autumn 1697, it recounts Fan's experiences during a challenging campaign that resulted in victory in the desert Jaomodo but where success hinged on the ability to move grain and horses for the troops through challenging terrain. Although the identity of the artist is unclear, its personal nature reflects a seeming trend for officers to commission such works, often from well-known artists of the period.¹¹⁶

The famous bibliophile and historian Miao Quansun 繆荃孫 (1844-1919) had recorded in his *Selected Writings* (*Yunzizaikan suibi* 雲自在龕隨筆) the existence of paintings depicting the Northern campaigns by Wang Hui for the official Song Daye and also by Wang together with Yu Zhiding for Chen Yuanlong. The whereabouts of these works were not known for more than a century until the latter work entitled 北征扈從圖 appeared at a Christie's auction in Hong Kong in November 2007.¹¹⁷ It proved to be a handscroll accompanied by a wealth of colophons corroborating Miao's account of the work. The National Museum of China also possesses a 692-centimetre-long handscroll entitled *The Frontier Pacification General's Western Campaign* (*Fuyuan Dajiangjun xizheng tu* 撫遠大將軍西征圖) depicting the 1720 campaign led by Prince Yinti (1688-1756), the 14th son of Kangxi.¹¹⁸ Since the Prince was under house arrest through the entire Yongzheng reign, the painting was probably created before 1723. Although its scale bears relation to the monumental programme painting projects instituted

¹¹⁵ Wang Hongjun and Liu Ruzhong, 'Qingdai pingding Zhunga'er guizu panluan de lishi huajuan', *Wenwu* (王宏钧, 刘如仲, 《清代平定准噶尔贵族叛乱的历史画卷》, 文物), 1976:12, pp. 68-74.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., p. 74, fn.2. Although the last folio bears the signature and seal of the noted painter Yu Zhiding (1647-after 1709), Wang Hongjun and Li Ruzhong have regarded it as spurious and a later addition.

¹¹⁷ Christie's Hong Kong, *Fine Chinese Classical Paintings and Calligraphy*, 26 November 2007, lot 838.

¹¹⁸ Wang and Liu, pp. 70-71.

under Kangxi, no direct connection can be made due to the lack of artists' signatures, prefatory remarks and colophons. Nevertheless, its title suggests that there was a primary protagonist—Prince Yinti—in this visual narrative of the campaign. The campaign had been a significant one for the prince and the emperor had conveyed to him that he would be new heir if he distinguished himself.¹¹⁹

IV. Victory pictures in the making

The idea of victory pictures took on a particular significance during the reign of the Qianlong emperor (1736-95). He brought war to the heart of public life by making overt moves to institutionalize and commemorate its practise. He used the military campaigns conducted in his name as the building blocks for realizing a project aimed at cultural transformation and the maintenance of imperial hegemony. In fact, as the military historian Kenneth Swope has noted, the 'intimate relationship between nationalism and militarism ... can trace its origins no later than the Qianlong period'.¹²⁰ Through a canny manipulation of the display of text, imagery, ritual and monument, he ensured that his victorious battles were imposed upon the collective consciousness of his empire.

Extant works, edicts and catalogues of the imperial collections suggest that victory pictures began to be made by painters in the imperial atelier, from the mid-1750s onwards, in the wake of military successes in the Xinjiang region.¹²¹ The information yielded by these primary sources suggests an intimate interplay between texts and images and a complicated transference of imagery between pictorial formats and media. The Qing imperial catalogue, *Siqu baoji*, lists works by the court painters Jiang Pu (1708-61) and Qian Weicheng (1720-72) depicting the campaigns in Zunghar and Ili. Based on inscriptions that Qianlong wrote for commemorative stelae, these works were in the monumental multi-scene handscroll format associated with the Southern Inspection Tour painting.¹²² Jiang's 1755 work, *Pingding Zhunga'er tu* (*Pacification of the Zungharia*), comprised eleven scenes based on imperial writings destined for commemorative stelae (*Gaozong Yuzhi Zhun'er Beiwen*). In 1759, at the

¹¹⁹ Perdue, 2005, p. 235.

¹²⁰ Swope, 2005, p. xviii.

¹²¹ Zeng Jiabao (Ka Bo Tsang), 'Ji feng gong, shu weiji: Qing Gaozong shiquan wugong de tuxiang jilu—gongchen xiang yu zhan tu', in *Gugong Wenwu Yuekan* 93 (1990), pp. 38-65.

¹²² *Siqu baoji sanbian*, p. 2280, *Siqu baoji xubian*, vol. 11, 'Qian Qing gong', pp. 305, 1201-04.

conclusion of the Muslim campaign, Qian was ordered to make a work based on another volume of the emperor's inscriptional writings, *Gaozong Yuzhi Pingding Huibu Gaocheng Taixue Beiwei*. The result was a monumental scroll, *Shengmo Guangyun tu* (*The Sacred Campaign*) more than ten metres long, and comprising 25 scenes.¹²³

The term 'victory picture' (*desheng tu* 得勝圖) seems to have been first used with reference to works by the Jesuit painter Guiseppe Castiglione. According to palace archives, Qianlong had commissioned Castiglione on the 28th day of the 7th lunar month in 1755 to make a portrait of his general Ayuxi as well as a large painting of his victorious army after the capture of Dawaci, a contender for the Khanate of Zungharia (**Fig. 1.8**). On the 4th day of the 8th month, the emperor designated that it be hung in an audience room of the Yuanmingyuan. He evidently held this type of painting in high regard as an order was made for a 'victory picture' by Castiglione to be hung in the Hall for Listening to Waves on the Fairy Isle (聽鴻樓, 瀛台) of the Forbidden City in the first month of 1757.¹²⁴ Similar commissions followed to celebrate the achievements in the Ili campaigns.

Preoccupied with his image, Qianlong had carefully crafted his role as emperor from an amalgam of precedent and innovation. To use the theatre as an analogy, he was playwright, lead actor, director and stage manager as well. Consequently, the stage from which he could launch his imperial persona was given careful consideration. The Ziguangge was a gallery of battles constructed to provide just such a backdrop. Here, the complementary pairing of portraits and war painting was fully exploited. The Zhiguange 紫光閣 was situated on the central lake (*Zhonghai*) in an old structure rebuilt in 1760 to accommodate the portraits of one hundred generals and statesmen who participated in Qianlong's campaigns (*gongchen tu* 功臣圖).¹²⁵ With large-scale depictions of the campaigns also covering its walls, it also served as a monument to the emperor's military prowess (*wugong* 武功).¹²⁶ Victory banquets for victorious officials and soldiers

¹²³ The former painting is in the collection of the National Museum of History, Beijing.

¹²⁴ 'Qing gongting huajia Lang Shining nianpu', *Gugong bowuyuan yuankan*, 1988, no. 2, p. 67; see also Yang Boda, 'Lang Shining zai Qing neiting de chuangzuo huodong ji qi yishu chengjiu', *Qingdai Yuanhua*, Beijing: Zijingcheng Chubanshe, 1993, pp. 131-177.

¹²⁵ Hummel, p. 74.

¹²⁶ According to the Sacred Instructions of Ten Reigns 1616-1874 (Shichao Shengxun) this was one of the virtues of kingship.

were given in front of this hall as commemorated in the Yao Wenhan's *An Imperial Banquet at the Zhiguange* in the Palace Museum, Beijing (in print form, see also Fig. 1.11).¹²⁷ Whilst the ceremonies of surrender depicted in the prints would have capitalized on the immediacy of the situation, the paintings of the Ziguangge gave it substance and the prints allowed the emperor's message to be disseminated. As Harold L. Kahn noted, 'as a manipulator of symbols and history, Qianlong had few peers'.¹²⁸

However, there appeared to have been a rationalization of the paintings made of the campaigns in the northwest frontier: in 1763, an order was given for Castiglione to make sixteen small-scale sketches (*xiaogao* 小稿) of victory pictures, to be copied by Yao Wenhan in four handscrolls.¹²⁹ According to a postscript in a letter from Father Augustin de Hallestein (1703-74) to his brother, the emperor issued an edict on 13th July 1765¹³⁰, commissioning 'sixteen prints of the victories that I won in the conquest of the kingdom of Dzungar and the neighbouring Mohammedan countries, which I had painted by Lamxinim [Castiglione] and other European painters who are in my service in the city of Peking, to be sent to Europe where the best artists in copper shall be chosen so that they may render each of these prints perfectly in all its parts on plates of copper'.¹³¹ The drawings were eventually sent to France to be etched onto plates and then printed. The process was time-consuming and the copper plates together with the prints were eventually returned to China in batches between 1772 and 1775.¹³² The result was *Xishi Zhangong tu* 西師戰功圖 (*Pictures of Meritorious Feats*

¹²⁷ See Nie, 1996, pp. 222-25.

¹²⁸ Harold L. Kahn, *Monarchy in the Emperor's Eyes: Image and Reality in the Ch'ien Lung Reign*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971, p. 200.

¹²⁹ 'Qing gongting huajia Lang Shining nianpu', p. 68.

¹³⁰ There is a discrepancy in the date in Chinese and Western sources. The Chinese edict bears the date 25th day of the 10th month, 19th year of the Qianlong reign, 1794 (see Zeng Jiabao, 1990, p. 57).

¹³¹ See Paul Pelliot, 'Les Conquêtes de l'Empereur de la Chine', in *T'oung Pao*, série II, vol. XX, 1921, pp. 183-275. A copy of this edict translated into French was found at the Archives National, Paris, 01, 1924 (Pelliot, p. 184). Quote adapted from Cécile and Michel Beurdeley (transl. Michael Bullock), *Giuseppe Castiglione: A Jesuit Emperor at the Court of the Chinese Emperors*, London: Lund Humphries, 1972, p. 79.

¹³² There is some confusion as to the number of engravings taken from the plates. Pelliot mentions that Hallestein's account mentions 100 sets. The figure of 200 appears in the contract for the execution of the engravings signed by the 'Hong' merchants who handled the transaction on behalf of the emperor (Pelliot, p. 271). It is also not clear how many copies of the prints were actually sent back to China. Chinese scholars assume it is 200 (Nie Chongzheng, "'Qianlong pingding zhunbu huibu zhantu' he Qingdai de tongban hua", in *Wenwu*, 1980:4, pp. 61-64 and 'Qingchao gongting tongban hua "Qianlong pingding zhunbu huibu zhantu"', in *Gugong Bowuyuan kan*, 1989, No. 4). Some copies were retained in France

during the Campaigns in the West), a series of 16 copper engravings (**Figs 1.9 a-d**). From the credits noted on these European engravings, it appeared that Castiglione had been assisted by three other missionary painters — Jean-Denis Attiret (Wang Zhicheng, 1702-68), Jean-Damascene Sallusti (An Deyi, d. 1781), and Ignatius Sichelbarth (Ai Qimeng, 1708-80) — in making sketches of larger-scale hangings in the Ziguangge.¹³³ Hallestein describes the process in his letter ‘reducing these large pictures into a smaller form—*ut illas magnas picturas in minorem formam redigerent*’¹³⁴. The so-called *xiaogao* are clearly based on *tieluo* as can be seen from a comparison of the print depicting ‘The Battle of Qurman’ and fragments of the original painting (**Figs 1.9b, 1.10a and b**).¹³⁵

Western scholarship on these copper-plate prints has primarily focused on researching the circumstances surrounding their creation from sources in European archives, or checking them for historical veracity.¹³⁶ Writings in Chinese especially by Palace Museum curators have been mostly descriptive.¹³⁷ When visual and historical analysis has been applied, the discussion has been located within a body of Chinese visual sources. These prints have been seen as generic pictures of war and a diachronic development from earlier precedents, notwithstanding differing contexts for depictions, and understood through an adaptation of formats and motifs.¹³⁸ However, I argue that the *Xishi zhangong tu* is neither a Western import nor the result of stylistic development in Chinese pictorial history. Rather, the scale of its commissioning and the circumstances of its creation were to leave a singular impression that was both all-encompassing and lasting, and in so doing, establish a narrative and an iconography of war. Through this process, the victory picture acquired specificity.

with the Royal Family and Henri-Léonard Bertin, Contrôleur-Général des Finances of the Compagnie des Indes.

¹³³ Pelliot, pp. 270-71.

¹³⁴ Ibid., p. 270

¹³⁵ For example, two works in Germany, in a private collection and in the Museum für Völkerkund, Hamburg, respectively, were discovered to be fragments of ‘Battle of Qurman’ *tieluo*. Niklas Leverenz, ‘From Painting to Print: *The Battle of Qurman* from 1760’, *Orientations*, May 2010, pp. 48-53. The paintings and the prints were shown side-by-side in the British Museum exhibition ‘The Printed Image in China from the 8th to the 21st Centuries’ (6 May-5 September 2010).

¹³⁶ See Pelliot, 1921; Walter Fuchs, ‘Die Schlachtenbilder aus Turkestan von 1765 als historische Quelle’, *Monumenta Serica* 4, 1939, pp. 116-124; Tanya Szrajber, ‘The Victories of the Emperor Qianlong’, in *Print Quarterly*, XXIII, 2006 (1): 28-46.

¹³⁷ Nie, 1980 and 1989.

¹³⁸ Ma Ya-chen, ‘Zhanzheng tuxiang yu Qianlong (1736-95) dui diguo wugong zi jiangou: yi “Pingding Zunbu Huibu desheng tu” wei xin’, MA thesis, National Taiwan University, 2000.

1. Going Global

The transference of visual imagery from painting to print, and of sourcing expertise from within the imperial workshops to France, marked a significant change in scopical regime. It implied that the Qing world-view was disseminated beyond its borders. Although this was not the first time, the technology of copper-plate printing had been utilized in an imperial production¹³⁹, the way in which the project was inspired, negotiated and later received in France points to a nation-to-nation diplomatic engagement that negates longstanding perception that the Qing rulers were inward looking with firm belief in their nation's self-sufficiency.¹⁴⁰ The nature of this dialogue is also underscored by a recent exhibition at the Louvre of these victory pictures: 'Prints of the Ideal China: When Emperor Qianlong commissioned Prints from Louis XV' (12 February-18 May 2009). The circumstances behind the creation and commissioning of the *Xishi Zhangong tu* in 1765 corroborates this view.¹⁴¹

Correspondence and documentation relating to the commission reveal the response of the French. Although the contract was drawn up by the Hong merchants and the first batch of drawings handed over to the care of the Compagnie des Indes, Qianlong's project took on an added dimension when it arrived in Paris in the autumn of 1766.¹⁴² As Castiglione's accompanying letter was addressed to 'très illustre Président de l'académie de Peinture', the drawings were handed over to the Marquis de Marigny, Suprintendent des Bâtimens. The King himself became involved in the project after reading a Mémoire by the Contrôleur-Général des Finances, Henri Léonard Bertin, that enumerated the commercial, political and religious advantages to be gained, and of how the Qianlong emperor was paying tribute to French industry by giving the project to France.¹⁴³ Marigny

¹³⁹ Matteo Ripa, a Jesuit priest from Naples, completed a series of 36 views of the Bishushanzhuang, the imperial summer retreat in 1713.

¹⁴⁰ For Qianlong's engagement with Western science and technology, see Joanna Waley-Cohen, 'China and Western Technology in the Late Eighteenth Century', in *American History Review*, December 1993, pp. 1525-44. Also noted by Laura Hostetler in respect of developments in map-making (*Qing Colonial Enterprise: Ethnography and Cartography in Early Modern China*, Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2001).

¹⁴¹ See Pascal Torres Guardiola, *Les Batailles De L'empereur De Chine: La Gloire De Qianlong Celebree Par Louis XV, Une Commande Royale D'estampes*, exh. cat., Paris: Passage, Musée du Louvre, 2009.

¹⁴² For an account of the confusion and political manoeuvring regarding who was to supervise the project, see Szrajber, pp. 35-37.

¹⁴³ Pelliot published this undated memo (Pelliot, 1921, pp. 203-04).

requested his assistant Charles Nicolas Cochin to direct the project. In Cochin's report to Marigny dated 9 January 1767, the King's involvement is clear: Cochin was to be his appointment and paid by him and there were to be royal bonuses for those who were of merit.¹⁴⁴ It is significant that the French gave every respect to the project, treating it to be one of political importance. Every effort was made to prevent the illicit taking of impressions and to make sure that none were available for the French market.¹⁴⁵

When the first batch arrived in Beijing in 1772, the Emperor's response to the prints and the plates revealed an interconnectedness with technology and its representation of power in the early modern world. Though pleased with the prints, he ordered Father Michel Benoist, superior of the mission of French Jesuits, to arrange for impressions to be made from them domestically.¹⁴⁶ These prints included inscriptions about the campaign written in the emperor's distinctive calligraphy (**Fig. 1.11**). Qianlong had rejected earlier offers by the French to make more impressions and now rejected further offers of European paper and materials for making ink from Cochin. Benoist died in 1774, shortly after news was received in Beijing of the dissolution of the Society of Jesus in France, and before the last batch of prints arrived in 1775.¹⁴⁷ Even before the prints from France arrived, the Qing imperial workshops were already making their own copper engravings of victory pictures (see Fig. 1.13).

Where did the idea for making a series of engravings come from? Qianlong was, according to Hallestein's letters, inspired by a series of engravings of panoramic battle pictures by Georges Philipp Rugendas of Augsburg (1666-1743) shown to him by the Jesuits. While it cannot be determined just how profound the Jesuit influence was on the visualization of war and empire, before the Ziguangge and Rugendas, there was already a long established European tradition of displaying victory pictures and making them in various media. The practice of building galleries of battle to commemorate victories was known as early as the 16th century, as evidenced by the one in San Lorenzo de El Escorial, the Spanish

¹⁴⁴ Szjraber, p. 38; original source *Nouvelles Archives de l'Art Francais*, 1905, no. 554. The engravers were Jacques Philippe Le Bas, Augustin de Saint-Aubin, Benoît Louis Prévost and Jean Jacques Aliamet.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., pp. 42, 44.

¹⁴⁶ Pelliot, 1921, pp. 222-23.

¹⁴⁷ Szjraber, p. 46.

royal seat, constructed during the reign of Philip II (r. 1556-98). Such galleries continued to be built well into the 19th century as demonstrated by the famous Galerie des Batailles installed by Louis Philippe I (r. 1830-40) at Versailles to celebrate French military prowess.

As demonstrated by depictions of the *Siege of Breda* (1624-25), imagery transferred easily between painting and print, and map and landscape representation. To commemorate what she considered her greatest military triumph, Infanta Isabella, the regent of southern Netherlands on Spain's behalf, commissioned Jacques Callot, an artist at the court of the Duke of Lorraine, prepare a map commemorating her successful siege (**Fig. 1.12**).¹⁴⁸ Belonging to an age when map-making still relied on visual modes of geographical representation, the not-quite diagrammatic depiction of contested territory is seamlessly integrated between the bird's eye view at the bottom and normal elevation at the top. Throughout the picture are vignettes depicting the pillage, torture and hangings that are typical of 17th century warfare. These individual scenes would later form the foundation of Callot's famous series of etchings on the miseries of war. The combination of portrait and landscape — of a ruler or general surveying the entire battlefield rendered in the wide-angled *vedute* view—which Callot had used in *Breda* became a fully developed sub-type for representing war in the 17th century.¹⁴⁹ A similar pictorial strategy may be seen in *Xishi Zhangong tu*, for example, the officers presiding over the siege in the foreground resemble the general watching the progress of his battle in 'The Relief of Black River Camp' from the Turkestan series (see Fig. 1.9a).

Not long after its creation, Callot's map was copied as an oil painting by Peeter Snayers (*Stadtholder Isabella at the Seige of Breda*, Prado, Madrid).¹⁵⁰ In 1633-34, Diego Velázquez incorporated details from Callot's map for his painting on this subject commissioned by Philip IV of Spain for a gallery celebrating the king's military triumphs at the Bueno Retiro in Madrid.¹⁵¹ The copy of this map, on view at the British Library's 'Magnificent Maps: Power, Propaganda and Art'

¹⁴⁸ Peter Barber and Tom Harper, *Magnificent Maps: Power, Propoganda and Art*, exh. cat., London: British Library Publishers, 2010, pp. 68-69.

¹⁴⁹ Peter Paret, *Imagined Battles: Reflections of War in European Art*, Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1997, p. 40.

¹⁵⁰ See Martin Warnke, *Political Landscape: The Art History of Nature*, London: Reaktion, 1994, p. 53.

¹⁵¹ Barber and Harper, p. 68.

exhibition, shows signs that it was hung and displayed like a painting. Its presentation in the context of an audience chamber would have anticipated a setting like the Zigguange. As part of a decorative programme—which, in the case of the Zigguange, included portraits of meritorious officers (see Fig. 1.8)—a celebration of victory would have been a symbol of the monarch's power. As an expression of a ruler's control over his territory, I suggest that the *desheng tu* may be read figuratively as maps. The phrase that Hallestein had used, 'to reduce these large pictures into a smaller form', did not only relate to the literal process of readying the battle images to make their transition from painting to print, they can be said to be an analogy for power—the power of reduction and not expansion. While a military campaign is full of loss and bloodshed and violence, the act of commemorating has the power to control its narrative and to reduce the image to one's satisfaction, likewise the delineation of borders in cartography and the mastery of technology in copper-plate engraving.

2. Blueprint for the Future

The series was to become a blueprint for future works. Each print was episodic depicting conflict at a specific location. Different time sequences, places, personalities and events were synthesized into one cohesive representation. Such devices were common in European military paintings where it has been observed that the bringing together of different planes of reality was to 'produce a superior view of the events'. The battleground is conceived as a landscape albeit a 'political landscape' where war had been idealized and mythologized and prominence was given to 'motifs whose objective purpose was gaining political importance'.¹⁵²

Some of these motifs are highlighted using two prints from the series, 'Hu'erman dajie' (The Victory at Qurman) and 'Tonggusiluke zi zhan' (The Battle of Tonguzluq) (**Figs 1.9b and 1.9c**). The use of the panoramic viewpoint was also significant. The total effect of massed forces blended against the vastness of sky and terrain served to emphasize the territorial significance of the victory and to heighten the devastating damage of defeat on the enemies. Bearing in mind the geography and the view that landscape as a visual representation is used to outline boundaries and assert ownership, its use in this context and in this media

¹⁵² Warnke, pp. 9-20, 53-55, 59.

could be interpreted as an attempt to commit to memory and to disseminate the vision of Manchu hegemony. The conquest of Turkestan had not only doubled the territorial extent of the Qing empire but there was now a decisive delineation of a region that had been contested since the Kangxi reign.

The proportional size of carefully rendered soldiers to the perspectival landscape elements served to heighten the sense of depth. The near geometric arrangements of the battle formations provide a sense of movement. The foregrounding of specific scenes give life to the practise of war. As seen on the left of 'Relief at Black River', the snaking-line format has been used to show troops spilling on to the landscape and a general, instead of the emperor, is now leading (see Fig. 1.9a). Since three campaigns – against the Dzungars, Ili and the Muslims – are depicted in the series, pictorial conventions can be observed. The Qing imperial army is invariably shown in pursuit of their fleeing enemies. Head-to-head combat was rarely depicted, the enemies when not shown in flight were always shown dead, defeated or in positions of subjugation. Other important elements included the depiction of encampments, the capture of walled cities, sieges and surrenders and the celebration of victory was a spectacle of state. Michael Chang reads the encampment as an emblem of martial prowess and observes them as being centrepieces in the *Mulan* paintings, where the emperor received visiting chieftains and important allies.¹⁵³ In the victory pictures they are an important motif and a site of surrender (see Fig. 1.9d).

Locally, Qianlong commissioned further series' of copper-plate prints commemorating campaigns in Jinchuan (1771-81), Taiwan (1788-90), Annam (1790), against the Gurkha (1795-96) and Yunnan (1795). The Jiaqing (1796-1820) and Daoguang emperors (1821-1850) were the motivating force behind series on campaigns against the Miao (1798) and against rebels in Central Asia (1830).¹⁵⁴ The scale of these later series' of engraved victory pictures varied, ranging from sixteen prints to a mere four for the Yunnan campaign. In fact, the imperial practice of commissioning victory pictures in painting continued well

¹⁵³ Chang, pp. 128-39.

¹⁵⁴ The website <http://www.battle-of-qurman.com.cn/e/hist.htm> features prints from all the series. Various scholars have given differing dates for these prints. The dates stated here are the ones used in Weng Lianqu, ed., *Qingdai Gongting Banhua*, Beijing, 2001, pp. 289-94. See also Walter Fuchs, 'Die Entwürfe der Schlachtenkupfer der Kienlung- und Taouang-Zeit', in *Monumenta Serica* 9, 1944, pp. 101-22.

into the 19th century.¹⁵⁵ The features described in the preceding paragraph can also be noted in subsequent series.

Thus, victory pictures, whether singly or as a series, and regardless of media, comprised multiple planes of reality or vignettes. While they are depictions of historical events, the mimetic representations are not representations of 'truth'. The repeated use of visual and artistic conventions and cultural clichés, abstracted the immediacy of their meaning to reflect the wider imperial agenda.

3. The Emperor's 'Imagined Geography'

Domestifying production may have stylistically 'sinicized' later victory pictures but perhaps more interesting was their visual emphasis on frontier regions, the specificities of their landscape, and their representations of 'other'. Features distinctive to an unfamiliar terrain were highlighted, used as indicators of differences to reinforce for the viewer the physical rigours of the military expansion and the plurality of empire. The pictures in Jinchuan series are dotted with intimidating stone towers that the Qing army initially found impenetrable (**Fig. 1.13**). It was only after Felix de Rocha (1713-81), a Portuguese Jesuit, was sent to the front to supervise the casting of cannon on site that the artillery began to fire more efficiently.¹⁵⁶ Such motifs stand out as standard symbols of geographical and cultural stereotypes: for example, bamboo thickets and aboriginal dwellings represent the savagery associated with Taiwan's island culture; while the Miao are defined by their distinctive appearance and costume (**see Figs 1.14 and 1.16**). A comparison between the first Turkestan series and the subsequent one more than half a century later would reveal how much the latter is distinguished by the costume of the region and its camel trains (**Fig. 1.17**).

Sources of depiction can be traced to the increasing relevance of geography as a discipline within the evidential scholarship movement (*kaozheng*), the increasing importance of travel writings as sources of information on frontier regions, the proliferation of *tu* (maps, pictures and illustrations) about them, and the burgeoning interest in documenting people from strange lands (i.e.

¹⁵⁵ See Hongxing Zhang, 'Wu Youru's "Victory over the Taiping": Painting and Censorship in 1886 China', PhD dissertation, SOAS, University of London, 1999 and 'Studies in Late Qing Dynasty Battle Paintings', in *Artibus Asiae*, vol. 60 no. 2 (2000), pp. 265-96.

¹⁵⁶ Waley-Cohen, 2006, p. 58.

ethnography).¹⁵⁷ Visual material fell primarily into the following categories: maps or landscape pictures (*ditu* 地圖 or *shanchuantu* 山川圖), ethnographic illustrations (*fengsutu* 風俗圖), and illustrations of flora and fauna (*fengwutu* 風物圖). It expresses a 'mapping impulse' that suggests that pictures provide information and not just merely a narrative.¹⁵⁸

More controversially, as the visual sources discussed here will show, the victory pictures can be situated in the view that the Qing were colonizers, who acquired new frontiers and sent its subjects to settle there. As Edward Said observed: the 'struggle over geography...is not only about soldiers and cannons but also about ideas, about forms, about images and about imaginings'.¹⁵⁹ The victory pictures can thus be conceived as the Qing 'imagined geography' of the world, its own empire and its subjects.¹⁶⁰ How was control of this vast and diverse territory maintained? Through most of the 20th century, scholarly consensus attributed the longevity of this non-Han (hence barbarian?) dynasty to its wholesale assimilation of Chinese culture and institutions rather than to coercion. The increasing availability of Qing archives in the PRC to international scholars and fresh research since the mid-1990s has brought to the forefront issues of ethnicity and identity.¹⁶¹ It puts forward the thesis that the Manchu emperors had a deliberate agenda, an 'imperial project': through military conquest and cultural transformation, they set out to 'forge a new and distinctive cultural environment that itself would generate and eventually emblemize a shared sense of community among the Qing's diverse imperial subjects'.¹⁶² In doing so, the Qing shifted the traditional border between Chinese (*hua* 華) and barbarian (*yi* 夷) and refashioned China as a multiethnic empire.¹⁶³ As a detailed study of the way these aspects of Qing rule are reflected in the victory pictures is

¹⁵⁷ See Benjamin A. Elman, 'Geographical Research in the Ming-Ch'ing Period', in *Monumenta Serica* 35, 1981-83, pp. 1-18; Emma Jinhua Teng, *Taiwan's Imagined Geography: Chinese Colonial Travel Writing and Pictures, 1683-1895*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004 and Hostetler, 2001.

¹⁵⁸ Svetlana Alpers, *The Art of Describing: Dutch Art in the Seventeenth Century*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1986, pp. 119-68.

¹⁵⁹ Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, London: Vintage Books, 1994, p. 6.

¹⁶⁰ Here I have adopted the term used by Emma Jinhua Teng that posits geography as a cultural construct that can be created through texts and images.

¹⁶¹ That is the 'New Qing History' school. See Peter C. Perdue, 'Comparing Empires: Manchu Colonialism', in *The International History Review* xx, no. 2, June 1998, pp. 254-61.

¹⁶² Waley-Cohen, 2006, p. 2.

¹⁶³ Emma Jinhua Teng, 'Taiwan in the Chinese Imagination, 17th-19th century', in *The Asia Pacific Journal: Japan Focus* (<http://www.japanfocus.org/-Andre-Vitchek/2450>, accessed 17 May 2010).

beyond the scope of this study, a few prints will be discussed by way of example, focusing in particular on landscape and figural depictions. Sources of comparison include gazetteer maps, tribute illustrations and genres depicting ethnic exotica like the Miao albums.

Emma Jinhua Teng's study provides rich material for understanding the Taiwan series.¹⁶⁴ And particular attention is also paid to Taiwan in this discussion as the island also becomes contested territory in the subsequent discussion of victory pictures a century later in the Sino-Japanese War. Taiwan is a metaphor for the process of Qing colonization; through examining travel writings, pictures and maps, Teng traces its process of transformation from 'savage island' into an integral part of the empire. Even though settlers from the mainland had been arriving since the late 17th century, the idea of Taiwan as a wilderness that embodied dangerous terrain and barren desolation persisted.¹⁶⁵ Since the rebellion was led by a settler, Lin Shuangwen 林爽文, the depictions did not focus on the savages who were its original inhabitants, and the subject of many ethnographical studies and depictions. Instead, the series concentrated on landscape, relying on the trope of 'empty space' that rendered Taiwan inhospitable. For example, maps from the *Gazetteer of Zhuluo County* (1717) comprised layered mountains, dense forests, bamboo thickets (**Fig. 1.15a**); the overhanging cliffs and the crashing waves of the northern tip of Taiwan show a startling similarity to the main motifs in 'Battle of Kuzhai' (**Fig. 1.14a**). These were areas that provided a strategic challenge for the Qing administrators and army, and defined Taiwan as being beyond the pale and as a hiding place for 'bandits and headhunters'. Not surprisingly, 'Capture of the Rebel Lin Shuangwen' would have been situated in such a setting (**Fig. 1.14b**). This is the only instance in which the aboriginal residents are depicted in this series: at the top left, the natives are shown outside their dwellings, rendered in accordance to pictorial conventions (**Fig. 1.15b**). They stand in stark contrast to the rebel leader held by a group of braves in the left foreground. Like a stage set, vertiginous hills rise up in the distant, dotted by indicators of colonization like the half-built and fenced-in homes.

¹⁶⁴ Teng, 2004.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., pp. 81-100.

Together with the interest in mapping frontiers and topographical differences, 'there was a desire to form a rigid taxonomy of the culturally-distinct races within the empire'.¹⁶⁶ In 1751, Qianlong issued an edict: 'We order the governors-general and provincial governors along the frontiers to have illustrations made copying the likeness of the clothing and ornaments of the Miao, Yao, Li, and Zhuang under their jurisdiction, as well as of outer barbarians and savages, and to submit these illustrations to the Grand Council, that they may be compiled and arranged for imperial survey. Thereby will be displayed the abundance of Our meetings with kings.'¹⁶⁷ This resulted in production of the *Qing Imperial Tribute Illustrations* (*Huang Qing zhigong tu*). Several versions exist both in woodblock prints as well as painting, with the most elaborate versions painted on silk and mounted as monumental handscrolls probably destined for the imperial domain.¹⁶⁸ The edict more specifically implies that the illustrations have to be uniform and complete, paying attention to details in their appearance, bearing, clothing and ornament suggesting that these were to become standardized ways of depiction.¹⁶⁹ 'Raising an Army' from the *Campaign against the Miao* is unusual in several ways: it does not depict a battle at a specific location but depicts a subject that relates to the vanquished (Fig. 1.16). The central focus is on the group of Miao in the foreground, and they are shown in hand-to-hand combat. Notwithstanding the monochrome medium, they correspond to representations in the *Tribute Illustrations* as well as the by-then established genre of the Miao album.¹⁷⁰ When seen in their entirety, with its depictions of different peoples and geography, the victory pictures could thus be seen as a cultural map of the Qing empire.

V. The Afterlife of the Zhangong tu: Transmission and Appropriation

The value which Qianlong attached to the copper-plate versions of the *Zhangong tu* is evident. In 1784, he issued an edict for copies to be distributed to other royal

¹⁶⁶ Pamela Kyle Crossley, 'The Qianlong Retrospect of the Chinese-Martial (*hanjun*) Banners', in *Late Imperial China* 10, no. 1 (June 1989), p. 64.

¹⁶⁷ I have used Emma Jinhua Teng's translation (Teng, 2004, p. 155).

¹⁶⁸ See for example Evelyn S. Rawski and Jessica Rawson, *China: The Three Emperors (1662-1795)*, exh. cat., London: Royal Academy of Arts, 2005, pp. 172-73.

¹⁶⁹ David M. Deal and Laura Hostetler (trans.), *The Art of Ethnography: A Chinese "Miao Album"*, Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2006, pp. xxi.

¹⁷⁰ See Hostetler, 2006.

residences, major institutions and temples throughout the land.¹⁷¹ Thus, those outside the courtly circles of Beijing, albeit a select group, now had access. Perhaps a more sinister import could be read into their other use. They were also given as gifts to book collectors who provided their collection for one of Qianlong's projects *Gujin tushu jicheng* (*Collection of books and illustrations from ancient and modern times*).¹⁷² These projects were a legitimate front for a literary inquisition from which the emperor sought to control the development of Chinese political and social thought. Picture a scenario in which important books in the library of a provincial gentry are removed and in exchange he is given a set of the *Zhangong tu*, countless words representing several thousand years of Chinese civilization in exchange for a set of mere drawings by Western artists depicting a Manchu military victory accompanied by the emperor's poems. Could the message have been any clearer?

In France, *Les Conquêtes de l'Empereur de la Chine* cast a spell on those involved in the project as well as the wider public. Although extra copies of the original engravings were made for the French King's library, great precautions were taken that no copies remained with the engravers. Yet, as Tanja Szrajber's research in the Nouvelles Archives de l'Art Français showed, persistent attempts were made to obtain the engravings by those connected to the project or the missionaries, such as the brother of Denis Attiret.¹⁷³ In 1785, an engraver and print-seller, Isidore-Stanislas Helman (1743-1806), produced in half-size the *Zhangong tu* series of 16 Qianlong had commissioned. Helman had been the student of Jean-Philippe le Bas, one of the engravers of the original set. To the sixteen prints, Helman added to the series in 1786 four more engravings based on Chinese paintings in the collection of Bertin and in 1788 four more.¹⁷⁴

Qianlong's commission had arrived in France when chinoiserie was at the height of its popularity. Not surprisingly, the first people to see the sketches viewed them as 'designs' that could be employed in a decorative manner for France to showcase its skills. Bertin recommended executing the first batch of four paintings

¹⁷¹ Zhuang Jifa, *Qing Gaozong shiquan wugong yanjiu*, Taipei: Guoli Gugong Bowuyuan, 1982, pp. 527-28. Zhuang lists the recipients mentioned in the imperial archives.

¹⁷² Nie, 1980, p. 64.

¹⁷³ Szrajber, p. 42.

¹⁷⁴ Michele Pirazzoli-t'Serstevens, *Gravures des Conquetes de l'Empereur de Chine K'ien-Long au Musée Guimet*, Paris: Musée Guimet, 1969.

on large vases of Royal Manufacture of Sèvres and as tapestries of the Royal Manufacture of the Gobelins as this would distinguish French artists and manufacture and distinguish them from the other nations that fell under the generic term 'European'.¹⁷⁵ Cochin's original idea was for the prints to be framed, and 'one will employ everything [emblematic figures] which characterizes the majesty of the King of France to make it stand out'.¹⁷⁶ He also suggested making impressions in red ink.

Although the French did not carry out their ideas, in the Qing empire, representations and references to victorious battles were parlayed across the spectrum of cultural production from official histories, to documentary paintings and prints, decorative arts and architecture as the emperor embarked on an active programme to commemorate his victories. For example, in addition to paintings and a copper-plate print series, the imperial workshops (*zaobanchu* 造辦處) were also commissioned to make lacquer screens depicting the Taiwan campaigns based on drawings by court artists Jia Quan and Li Ming (**Figs 1.18a, b and c**).¹⁷⁷ Contrary to the common assumption that painting and printing must come first, the inscriptions by Qianlong (1787) in fact pre-date the production of the prints by two years.

Both the French and the Qing responses to these depictions of victory are telling as to how they were regarded within a pictorial hierarchy that privileged painting in a grand academic tradition. Although victory pictures continued to be made for the Qing emperor until the mid-19th century, they did not possess the ambitious intent of the first set. While highly visible in their own time, Qianlong's victory pictures faded from view and were largely forgotten by the imperial milieu by the end of the Qing period. In 1935, according to progress reports on the cataloguing of holdings then underway in the Palace Museum, imperially commissioned works like the victory pictures had been discovered in the map depository of the imperial workshops (*zaobanchu yutu fang*), a part of the Imperial Household Department (*neiwufu*). In the imperial inventories, they were

¹⁷⁵ Szrajber, pp. 37-38.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 39.

¹⁷⁷ Herbert Butz et al., *Bilder für die Halle des Purpurglanzes: Chinesische Offizierporträts und Schlachtenkupfer der Ära Qianlong (1736-1795)*, exh. cat., Berlin: Museum für Ostasiatische Kunst, 2003, pp. 62-67.

categorized under the military classification (*wubei*, *wugong*) or as history (*shishi*).¹⁷⁸

Thus the less than accidental way in which ritual, painting and print worked in concert with each other all clearly leads to the conclusion that the commemoration of war was calculated and carefully orchestrated. Nevertheless, the media discussed so far could be said to be ephemeral in nature and its audience limited to an elite ruling class. As permanence and visibility were required for the imposition of the Qing cultural hegemony, more visible forms of media were sought. Commenting on the materiality of media, the pioneering print historian Tsuein-hsuei Tsien has noted that materials used for paintings and prints are 'horizontal' communications meant for interaction with contemporaries whilst durable materials like stone were 'vertical' in nature meant for communication across time.¹⁷⁹ Consequently, stone-engraved memorials, often monumental in nature, were installed in temples and in public places. Hundreds of inscribed stelae, many showing Qianlong's calligraphy were raised throughout the 18th century.¹⁸⁰ Depictions of victory over ethnic minorities were also found etched on the walls of important buildings. Rubbings collected by early 20th century sinologists Edouard Chavannes and Berthold Laufer in Xian, probably from the Ci'en Si or the Dayan Ta, depict *The Surrender of the Black Barbarians of the Kokonoi Region* and *Hongmiao guihua tu (Scene of Submission of the Red Miao)*, events which took place in 1807 and 1740, respectively (**Fig. 1.19**).¹⁸¹

Before that, the militarization of culture was already instilled through all levels of society.¹⁸² Military activity was continuous and a visible part of daily life throughout the empire. The population would have been witness to armies marching to and from war as well as to the elaborate rituals that were held to

¹⁷⁸ 'Zhengli yuyu zhi jinguo', in *Guoli Beiping Gugong Bowuyuan Shizhounian Jinian Wenxian Tekan*, Beijing: Guoli Gugong Bowuyuan, 1935, pp. 23-27; Liu Guan-e, 'Neiwufu yutu fang cang tu jiao', in *Guoli Beiping Gugong Bowuyuan Shizhounian Jinian Wenxian Luncong*, Beijing: Guoli Gugong Bowuyuan, 1936, pp. 135-46.

¹⁷⁹ Tsuen-hsuei Tsien, *Written on Bamboo and Silk: The Beginnings of Chinese Books and Inscriptions*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962, p. 179.

¹⁸⁰ Waley-Cohen, 2006, pp. 21-47.

¹⁸¹ The rubbings collected by Laufer are in the Field Museum, Chicago (see Hosien Tchen, M. Kenneth Starr et al, *Catalogue of Chinese Rubbings from the Field Museum, Fieldiana Anthropology No. 3*, Chicago, 1981, p. 300, entries nos 1254 and 1255). Chavannes published the rubbings in *Mission Archéologique dans la Chine Septentrionale*, Paris 1909, pl. CCCCXLVIII.

¹⁸² Waley-Cohen, 2006, pp. 22-47.

celebrate their victories. There were garrisons in all the towns. Large numbers of artisans were also involved in the grand enterprise of commemorating war. Ironically as victory pictures were imposed over the cultural and physical landscape of the empire as a form of hegemony, imperial 'ownership' of the images waned. Victory pictures were taken up/appropriated by new patrons, received by different audiences and reflected changing circumstances, as discussed in the later chapters. As a coda, showing its adaptability to technology, Qianlong's victory pictures made an appearance in photolithographic form. In 1890, H. Salzwedel, the German photographic company based in Shanghai, brought out an edition bearing the English title *The Conquest of Eastern Turkestan in 16 Pictures* (Ch. *Da Qing Guo yuti pingding Xinjiang zhantu* 大清國御題平定新疆戰圖) (**Fig. 1.20**). According to notes in a copy in the National Library of China, Beijing, the plates were based on an edition of the victory pictures in France. Issued at the end of almost half a century of military losses for the Qing and in a foreign treaty port, it evidently had a different context for its audience.

CHAPTER TWO

THE SINO-FRENCH WAR: A VERY VISUAL WAR

While historians are divided on their explanations as to how China came to be a failing empire by the 19th century, they all agree that the prosperous age of the Qing was clearly in decline by the end of the Qianlong reign.¹⁸³ A population explosion in the 18th century and a chain of natural disasters in the 19th had put a strain on China's resources. These phenomena together with changes in the economic infrastructure, the decentralization of imperial control (especially over its military), the introduction of quasi-colonial enclaves and the development of new and distinct forms of urban culture all contributed to a state of flux. This was characterized by an increasing unrest coupled with militarization through all levels of society that played itself out as rebellions and riots of the common people from within and, from without, the endemic wars waged by covetous foreigners, who had for so long been kept out of China.¹⁸⁴ In William T. Rowe's words, it was 'a perfect storm of three simultaneous problems: the external shock of the expanding West, a secular crisis caused by the accumulation of socio-economic difficulties over the long term, and more acute political dysfunctions associated with the familiar pattern of the dynastic cycle'.¹⁸⁵

The Qing posture towards empire changed from aggressive to defensive over the course of the century. Although victory pictures continued to be produced in various media by artists at court, they no longer celebrated territorial expansion but instead commemorated the successful suppression of rebellion, thus upholding the notion of *pax sinica*. During the Jiaqing and Daoguang reigns, two further sets of copper-plate prints were produced

¹⁸³ Over the past decade, historians are increasingly eschewing the view that this decline was China's failure. Kenneth Pomeranz, for example, reframes China's position vis-à-vis the West as one of divergence, primarily resulting from developments in Europe that facilitated the Industrial Revolution (Pomeranz, 2000; Rowe, 2009, p. 147)

¹⁸⁴ See Mary Backus Rankin, *Elite Activism and Political Transformation in China: Zhejiang Province, 1865-1911*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1986; Kwang-Ching Liu and Richard J. Smith, 'The military challenge: the north-west and the coast', in John K. Fairbank and Kwang-Ching Liu, eds., *The Cambridge History of China Vol. 11, part 2, Late Ch'ing, 1800-1911*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980, pp. 202-73.

¹⁸⁵ William T. Rowe, *China's Last Empire: The Great Qing*, Cambridge, MA and London: The Belknap of Harvard University Press, 2009, p. 150.

respectively commemorating campaigns against the Miao (1798) and rebels in Central Asia (1830). The Xianfeng (1851-61) and Tongzhi (1862-1874) reigns saw the dynasty battling major rebellions against the Taiping (1851-64), the Nian (1851-68), and against Muslims in the southwest provinces of Yunnan and Guizhou (1856-74) and the northwestern provinces of Shaanxi, Gansu and Xinjiang (1862-78). As late as the Guangxu reign (1875-1908), a large-scale painting project was initiated in 1885 to celebrate the government victory in these mid-century rebellions.¹⁸⁶

But in that century, the Qing also fought two wars against the British, one against the French, one against the Japanese and one against the allied troops of eight industrialized nations (Baguo lianjun 八國聯軍) during the Boxer Rebellion. Since these conflicts either ended ignominiously or indifferently for the Qing, there was no imperial intention to commemorate them visibly.¹⁸⁷ By comparison, these wars reflecting the so-called 'scramble for China' received high public profile in the home countries of the aggressors and rapidly generated a flurry of illustrations in newspapers, pictorial journals and published accounts by war veterans and eyewitnesses. Despite what we know of China's flourishing visual culture, and given how militarized and militant Qing society was, relatively meagre evidence survives in China itself of pictorial depictions of these significant events.

However, my research in various museum, archival and library collections has revealed substantive depictions of the late Qing period wars, many in the form of sheet prints. In addition, several paintings depicting wars and rebellion of the 19th century, that have emerged from private collections and appeared at auction in recent years, suggest a varied range of artistic practices in rendering victory pictures and a more intimate interaction between paintings and print

¹⁸⁶ Comprising 67 paintings and many more portraits, cartoons and original scrolls belonging to the project survive in various collections around the world. (see Zhang, 2000, p. 268, n. 13 and 14, pp. 271-73, Appendix 1).

¹⁸⁷ The Empress Dowager Cixi, initially motivated by the peace agreement between France and China on 9 June 1885, had commissioned the grand project to commemorate Qing victory in 4 conflicts, including the Sino-French War. Court documents refer to the project as the 'Four Cases' (*si'an* 四案). Eventually only three of the four cases were realized and the Sino-French was quietly dropped (Zhang, 1999, pp. 12-14).

especially in the popular realm (see Fig. 2.3).¹⁸⁸ By bringing together works from these diverse sources, a framework can be formed by considering war as a mediasphere, i.e. as a form of cultural production.¹⁸⁹ The sheet prints are used as the primary platform for discussion as they have never been studied in detail. As mentioned in the Introduction, these prints have often been taken at face value and written off as being factually incorrect or as instruments of propaganda. More recently, they have been described as examples of ‘newspainting’, a new genre that flourished in the West with the rise of pictorials like the *Illustrated London News* and *The Graphic* and in China with publications like the *Dianshizhai huabao* (點石齋畫報).¹⁹⁰

By locating these depictions within the concept of war as a mediasphere, I suggest that they are victory pictures. In this chapter, the discussion advances a hypothesis that, during the period of the ‘foreign wars’, victory pictures had taken a new meaning especially in popular culture. The Sino-French War has been taken as a starting point since sufficient material survives from the period to form a coherent analysis. Moreover, it is also relevant as a war of several ‘firsts’: the first that was set against the backdrop of the treaty-port environment; the first where information was rapidly parlayed through a worldwide communications via electric telegraph (*dianbao* 電報); the first that was reported in the Chinese-language press by field journalists; the first to have been published through new media formats and print technology from the West, and the first fought by the modernized Qing imperial navy. Through the distorting lenses of

¹⁸⁸ For depictions of the Taiping Rebellion see Sotheby’s HK, 8 October 2009, lot 1660; Sotheby’s HK, 9 October 2007, lot 1312; Christie’s London, 10 May 2006, lot 222; Sotheby’s London, 16 April 1996, lot 467. For the Nian Rebellion, see Sotheby’s NY, 23 March 2011, lot 637, and the Muslim Rebellion Sotheby’s NY, 15 September 2010, lot 367 and Sotheby’s NY, 19/20 March 2013, lot 449. Hongxing Zhang has identified four paintings in collections in the West as belonging to the imperial ‘Four Cases Project’: one depicting a scene from the Taiping Rebellion from the McTaggart Collection; two depicting the Nian in the National Gallery, Prague, and one from the Muslim Rebellion in the Royal Collections, Sandringham House (Zhang, 2000, Appendix 1, pp. 271-73).

¹⁸⁹ Alexander Townsend des Forges, *Mediasphere Shanghai: The Aesthetics of Cultural Production*, Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2007, pp. 17-18. I have partially adapted Alexander des Forges’s interpretation of the ‘mediasphere’ as a form of cultural production that consists of 1) a wide range of products that appear simultaneously and regularly (here, including but not limited to prints, newspapers, pictorials, illustrated collections, photographs and advertisements) and, 2) ‘frequent connections and references between these products across boundaries between different texts, genres, and media’.

¹⁹⁰ Wagner, ‘Joining the Global Imaginaire: The Shanghai Illustrated Newspaper *Dianshizhai huabao*’, in Wagner, ed., *Joining the Global Public: Word, Image, and City in Early Chinese Newspapers, 1870-1910*, Albany: State University of New York Press, 2007, pp. 105-06.

modernity and globalization, the victory picture acquired new characteristics. And as such, this chapter will examine a range of depictions of the Sino-French war and how the rendition of *desheng tu* was impacted by changes in the conduct and perception of war, artists' practice, the coming of Western lithography and modernity.

I. A Missing Link: Pre-1884 prints and the Opium Wars

By the mid-19th century, the *desheng tu* was no longer confined to the imperial milieu; as discussed in the previous chapter, the pictorial genre had been widely disseminated beyond the palace through the raising of public monuments and the circulation of printed and painted images, albeit among elite circles. It remains unclear when the victory picture infiltrated popular culture and was first depicted in sheet-print format, however, both pictorial and textual sources though scant, suggest that it was already well understood genre from the Opium Wars (a.k.a. Anglo-Chinese Wars; 1839-42, 1856-60). Nevertheless, it bears remembering that the Qing viewed these two conflicts only as local wars and there were, as yet, no networks or mechanisms of popular mass communications.¹⁹¹

The two Opium Wars were the earliest conflicts China fought against a 'modern' foreign power. Both followed a similar pattern: after extensive diplomatic wrangling and localized skirmishes, British marines broke through Chinese blockades designed to contain the fighting around Canton and made their way up the Yangzi to occupy Nanjing in the first instance, and breached the Dagu forts to take Tianjin in 1858 and Beijing in 1860 in the second war.¹⁹² These wars were to have such profound consequences for the Qing dynasty that until today there is the school of historiography that still considers the Treaty of Nanjing in 1842 as the start of a century of humiliation for China, a victim of Western or Japanese imperialism. Although a substantial body of writing exists in Chinese, the absence of Chinese depictions stands out when compared with the wealth of foreign (especially British) visual material that exists in the record of these two

¹⁹¹ See Peter C. Perdue, 'The First Opium War: The Anglo Chinese War of 1839-42', *MIT Visualizing Cultures* (http://ocw.mit.edu/ans7870/21f/21f.027/opium_wars_01/ow1_essay03.html, accessed 17 October 2011).

¹⁹² For a recent account of the changing perception of these wars, see Julia Lovell, *The Opium War: Drugs, Dreams and the Making of China*, London: Picador, 2011.

wars.¹⁹³ Nevertheless, limited evidence—a clutch of textual references, some contemporary travellers' accounts, secondary sources and a single print—suggest that popular depictions of the war were being made.

Mainland Chinese scholarship in the 1950s through the 1980s, routinely categorized these depictions as 'anti-imperialist' (*fandi* 反帝). Wang Shucun's 1982 article in which he describes two depictions of episodes from the First Opium War is typical of this approach.¹⁹⁴ One example, a line drawing (perhaps a draught for a print) of an encounter between British and Chinese troops which he entitles 'The Cannons Face Elliot (Pao da Yilü 炮打義律)', and identifies as a confrontation between Lin Zexu (林則徐; 1785-1850) and Captain Charles Elliot in 1839 when the former tried to enforce an opium blockade, and where foreign soldiers are shown in flight. The other is a leaf entitled 'The Recovery of Dinghai' (*Shoufu Dinghai* 收復定海) depicting the fort, gunboats in the bay and foreign soldiers landing on the shore. It is taken from an album of landscapes and figurative studies (*Yongxia shanshui renwu huace* 永遐山水人物畫). Wang believes that this was an album painted to reflect the experiences of an official stationed at the fort¹⁹⁵ — not unlike some of the documentary or commemorative works by participants in the 18th century campaigns discussed in the previous chapter. Unfortunately, we only have Wang's descriptive text for these works and their present whereabouts are not known; he does not illustrate them or mention their provenance.

Earlier textual accounts, some of them by eyewitnesses, may have more veracity. According to William Hunter, a Canton resident during the First Opium War:

'When the [British] vessels lay at anchor in front of the city... representations of them were cut on blocks of wood, innumerable copies were struck off, and sold about the city and the suburbs for less than halfpenny.... Notwithstanding

¹⁹³ In the form of memoirs by serving officers and doctors, see, for example, John Ouchterlony, *The Chinese War: An Account of all the Operations of the British Forces from the Commencement to the Treaty of Nanking*, London: Saunders and Otley, 1844), which included 53 illustrations of some of the key sites and battles based on the author's drawings; in the *Illustrated London News* as news reportage, or even as engravings after the event by Thomas Allom in his series *The Chinese Empire Illustrated* brought out between 1843 and 1847.

¹⁹⁴ Wang Shucun, 'Fandi de minjian huihua 反帝的民間繪畫', in *Zhongguo Minjian Nianhua Shi Luniju* 中國民間年畫史論集, Tianjin, 1991, pp. 201-03 (first published in *Meishu Shilun* 美術史論, 1982:2).

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 201-02

the havoc the fleet had occasioned to all the Chinese defences, still the barbarians were described as beaten.’¹⁹⁶

In the pioneering study by Roswell S. Britton (1897-1951) on publishing in China, he describes such sheets as ‘printers’ by-products’. They were apparently referred to as *xinwen zhi* 新聞紙 (lit. news papers), which appeared in larger cities when whenever eventful news occurred and were hawked in the streets for a cash or two or as much as five cash for coloured pictorials. Each sheet ordinarily contained a single story, but on occasions of extraordinary news, a series might be made of related items.¹⁹⁷ Britton also noted that from the period of the first Opium War, ‘pictorial sheets depicting the British men-of-war in Canton in 1841 had long explanations composed in verse, grandiloquent but not difficult to read’, suggesting that he himself might have seen some of the examples Hunter describes.¹⁹⁸ There is a single print in the collection of the British Library that corresponds to these descriptions (see Fig. 3.17). It depicts two vessels—one, a British man-of-war and the other, one powered by steam—accompanied by 55 lines of verse. The print is analyzed in greater detail in Chapter Three within the context of the development of maritime art in China.

Of the Second Opium War, I have to date only come across one single example that has been reproduced in monochrome in a pictorial, a couple of books and on the internet (**Fig. 2.1a**).¹⁹⁹ The whereabouts of the actual print is not known but it has been reproduced several times. Entitled *A True Picture of the Devils’ Great Defeat* (*Dabai Guizi tu* 大敗鬼子圖), it depicts a group of three vessels — a steamer, a man-of-war and a rowing boat — in the left corner, while the remaining space shows Chinese troops attacking fleeing or felled British soldiers. Set against hills and buildings, the picture depicts an event that took place, according to the caption, in Baiyunshan, a scenic spot on the outskirts of Canton in

¹⁹⁶ William C. Hunter, *Bits of Old China*, London: K. Paul, Trench & Co., 1885, pp. 190-92.

¹⁹⁷ Roswell S. Britton, *The Chinese Periodical Press 1800-1912*, Shanghai, Hong Kong and Singapore: Kelley & Walsh, 1933, pp. 4-5.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

¹⁹⁹ See Cyril Field, *Britain’s Sea Soldiers: A History of the Royal Marines and their Predecessors*, vol. 2, Liverpool: Lyceum Press, 1924, p. 144; Jane E. Elliot, 2002, fig. 3.4 and ‘Opium Wars: Second Opium War’, woodcarving, Photograph. *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/media/100656/Second-Opium-War-undated-wood-engraving> (accessed 25 October 2011).

1857. It was first reproduced in an 1858 issue of the *Illustrated London News*.²⁰⁰ The caption in Cyril Field's history of the British Marines suggests that the print was coloured: 'Marines in red coats, blue trousers. Sailors — blue coats, red trousers. Officers — green coats.'²⁰¹ While largely schematic and lacking in decorative or realistic landscape details, the layout of the woodblock print closely resembles an episode from the *Campaign Against Taiwan* series (1787-88) entitled 'The Capture of Zhuang Datian (*Shengqin Zhuang Datian* 生擒庄大田)' (**Fig. 2.1b**). It is also interesting to note that the former print appears to correspond to Wang Shucun's description of the confrontation between Lin and Elliot he had seen. While the visual similarity between the woodblock print and the imperial copperplate work is compelling, the absence of other examples and the lack of context prevents us from making direct connections between them. The questions as to when, where and why the *Devils' Great Defeat* was made remain unanswerable, even though the earliest documentation of the Second Opium War print is only a year after the event.

More significantly, the statesman and poet, Baoting 寶廷 (1840-90) explicitly mentions the term *desheng tu* in one of his verses, *Dumen suimu zhuzhici* 都門歲暮竹枝詞:

Old drafts, new ones, the pictures change from year to year,
Hung out on racks they cover the streets;
Hanging high is one of human combat;
I recognized it to be a victory picture of the time.²⁰²

It is not known when the verse was written but the commentary that accompanies the verse in the undated compilation of Baoting's works explains that the poet was referring to pictures of Lin Zexu's purported victories in the First Opium War that were sold in his youth but were now rarely seen.²⁰³ As Baoting would have been barely two years of age when the Treaty of Nanjing was signed, it suggests several things: that what Baoting had seen may have been pictures of the later Opium War like the print in Figure 2.1a; or, if it had been a picture of the first war or of Lin

²⁰⁰ For the entire page from the *Illustrated London News* with the sheet-print reproduced, see <http://www.fotoe.com/image/20163674> (accessed 1 July 2013).

²⁰¹ Field, 1924, p. 144.

²⁰² 舊稿新翻歲歲殊，畫棚羅列遍通衢。高懸一幅人爭看，認是當年得勝圖'. Baoting, *Ou zhai shicao*, in *Si jiu ji*, n.d., p. 13(a). A member of the Aisin Gioro clan, for Baoting's biography, see Arthur Hummel, *Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing Period (1644-1912)*, Washington DC: U.S. Govt. Print. Off, 1943, pp. 611-12.

²⁰³ '幼時畫棚賣有《林文忠得勝圖》，今少有矣'

Zexu's exploits, these victory pictures had rather long shelf-lives and continued to be produced after the war ended. The latter suggestion has implications for the seriality of imagery discussed in Chapter 4. The verse is also enlightening for various reasons: it associates the victory picture not with news reportage but locates it within the repertoire of sheet-print production in Baoting's lifetime and possibly amongst the auspicious pictures that people would discard and change every year (later referred to as *nianhua*); and it tells us how they were displayed by vendors.

But by and large, Chinese illustrations concerning the Anglo-Chinese Wars had focused not on the battle but on Lin Zexu's destruction of the opium stocks in 1839. The Lazarist priest and noted explorer, Joseph Grabet (1808-53), who was in North China at the time of the war, reported seeing a series of four pictures about Lin. They related a fictitious story of how Lin, disguised as a merchant, boarded a clipper to purchase opium; once on board, he revealed himself and arrested the crew.²⁰⁴ By the end of the Qing period, i.e. from about the 1890s onwards, depictions tended to be reformist or nationalist in orientation, focusing on Lin Zexu's actions as a heroic acts.²⁰⁵

How do we account for the scarcity of material from this period? One reason could be that these extant prints were local productions with very limited distribution. This would substantiate both Hunter's and Britton's accounts. Wang Shucun also attributes prints like the one in Figure 2.1a to Guangzhou.²⁰⁶ Although there were the rare victories by local militia like the Sanyuanli incident during the First War, the events received little recognition in the rest of the empire and there was hardly any immediate impact on the vast majority of the Qing subjects. The modern historian's take that the Qing government made efforts to play down the wars and localize the sites of action around the Guangzhou area would support this

²⁰⁴ Britton, pp. 6-7, quoting a letter 16/2/1847 to John Francis Davis, Minister Plenipotentiary to China from his secretary Alexander Johnston, British Public Record Office, F.O. 17/123. Grabet together with Evariste-Regis Huc were known for their travels in Tibet and Central Asia (*Travels in Tartary, Thibet and China, 1844-1846*, English edition, 1851).

²⁰⁵ A well-published example is the illustration entitled 林文忠公燒燬鴉片 from a series on the achievements of the dynasty's statesman 國朝名人政績圖 published in the pictorial *Shishi bao* 時事報 in 1909 (see Perdue, *MIT Visualizing Cultures*, British Museum, [1839_LinDestrOp_1909print]).

²⁰⁶ Wang Shucun, *Zhongguo Nianhua Fazhan Shi*, Tianjin: Tianjin Renmin Meishu Chubanshe, 2005, p. 263.

view.²⁰⁷ Another reason could be that major urban centres for popular print production in the Jiangnan region were destroyed during the upheavals of the Taiping Rebellion: in particular, Suzhou was occupied by the rebels in 1860, and retaken by Qing troops in 1864. Although there are no contemporary sources that expressly mention that the print industry was destroyed, the reasonable assumption can be made as the areas where arts and crafts had been located were razed to the ground.²⁰⁸ Apart from the body of 'Gusu 姑蘇' perspectival prints in largely foreign collections, few prints and woodblocks from Suzhou before this period have survived in China.²⁰⁹ Post-Taiping, the print industry relocated from the Changmen area to the suburb of Taohuawu 桃花塢, though much reduced in scale, and as will be discussed in Epilogue, it developed close associations with the printers in the old city of Shanghai.²¹⁰

While not depicting war, a rare dated example from the SOAS collection may give an indicator of what Suzhou prints and, to extrapolate, what victory pictures if produced from this period and region could have looked like. The Spring Ox Calendar (*chunniu tu* 春牛圖) bears the date '23rd year of the Daoguang reign' (1843) and is entitled 'Foreign Nations Bring Wealth' (*Yangguo jinbao* 洋國進寶) (**Fig. 2.2**). It shows an ox being led across a bridge set against a Western-style perspectival landscape with the European factory buildings set in the far distance.²¹¹ Its palette and stylistic characteristics suggest a Suzhou provenance. Dated immediately after the conclusion of the First Opium War, it would seem that the xenophobia that has come to be associated with official accounts of the period was not universal, and there were certain quarters of the Chinese population that welcomed the promise of riches through trade. Exploratory journeys beyond the Pearl Delta undertaken by rogue traders and missionaries in the 1830s compared the differences between the frosty receptions from local officials and the wide-eyed

²⁰⁷ Rowe, pp. 165-74, 190-93; Perdue, *MIT Visualizing Cultures*.

²⁰⁸ Aying, 1954, p. 26; Lust, p. 66; Laing, 2004, p. 53 and Wang Shucun, 2005, p. 258.

²⁰⁹ See Higuchi Hiroshi, *Chûgoku hanga shûsei*, Tokyo: Mitû Shooku, 1967; Aoki Shigeru and Kobayashi Hiromitsu, *"Chûgoku no yôfûga" ten: Minmatsu kara Shin jidai no kaiga, hanga, sashiebon*, Tokyo-to Machida-shi: Machida Shiritsu Kokusai Hanga Bijutsukan, 1995; Wang Cheng-hua, 'Chengshi yu shijue shangpin: Qingdai chuzhongqi Suzhou banhua de shangye mianxiang' (forthcoming).

²¹⁰ Xie Changyi, 'Qing mo de Taohuawu nianhua', in Shanghai Tushuguan, *Qingmo Nianhua*, Beijing: Renmin Meishu Chubanshe, 2000, pp. 22-32.

²¹¹ The motif of an ox being led refers back to a practice that originated during the Song dynasty (960-1279). *Dongjing menghua lu* records that an ox would be led and driven with whips into the capital and imperial city on the day before spring.

but enthusiastic mobs that followed them through the streets, clamouring for the curious tracts they were handing out.²¹²

In 2006, a work offered by Christie's South Kensington from the collection of Andrew Franklin may also provide some clues to the nature of popular renditions of war (**Fig. 2.3**). It depicts a battle fought in 1853 in the outskirts of Tianjin when the Qing troops were able to repel the Taipings from taking the city.²¹³ The troops are shown confronting each other, armed with rifles and spears, there is a title written in horizontal on the right and, on the left, the inscription is written in the vertical. It is a format that is common in the later victory pictures. Although the catalogue identifies it as a watercolour painting, it could well be a print from Yangliuqing 楊柳青, a centre of sheet print production in the suburbs of Tianjin. Usually, only the outlines were woodblock-printed in Yangliuqing prints, with colouring and decorative details applied by hand and, as such, these lavishly coloured prints were often indistinguishable from paintings. The dimensions of 66 x 138.5 centimetres also correspond to the measurements of larger-scale prints from this centre of production and the imperial victory pictures.

Thus, though isolated, the 19th century works discussed in this section, together with the diverse textual sources, are worth mentioning. They are the promise of things to come – suggestive of formats, genres and journeys that will be associated with the victory picture in the following decades.

II. The Written Record: Historical Background of the Sino-French War

More sheet prints depicting victorious battle have survived from the Sino-French War: examples can be found in collections worldwide such as the Shanghai Library²¹⁴, the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem, Massachusetts and the National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden, and even in the Public Records Office at Kew Gardens, London, where interestingly they

²¹² Hugh Hamilton Lindsay and Karl Gützlaff sailing in the Lord Amherst in 1832, and Walter Medhurst and Edwin Stevens on the *Huron* in 1835 (Lindsay, 1833; Gützlaff, 1834; Medhurst, 1836; Steven, 1835); Robert Bickers, *The Scramble for China: Foreign Devils in the Qing Empire, 1832-1914*, London: Allen Lane, 2011, pp. 18-76.

²¹³ Christies South Kensington, 'The Andrew Franklin Collection of Asian Art' sale, 10 May 2006, lot 222.

²¹⁴ Originally from the Bibliotheca Major Zi-ka-wei (Xujiahui), collected by Jesuit priests in the from the late 19th century to the 1930s (Zhu Junzhou, 'Guan cang nianhua laiyuan ji qi chuanjiaoshi shiye shupin', in Shanghai Tushuguan, 2000, pp. 1-12).

accompany diplomatic missives.²¹⁵ Until now these have never been studied together as a cohesive body of material before, or in relation to other visual representations of the war, such as paintings and illustrations in books and pictorial journals.

Before addressing the prints and other types of visual representations related to the war, an orientating reading of the nature of the written record and also a brief description of the key events gleaned from these sources is necessary. Surprisingly, until the aggregation of knowledge made possible by the advent of sites like Wikipedia and e-notes, the texts relating to the Sino-French war, especially accounts of the battlefield, in both French and Chinese have rarely been brought together and examined at a critical distance.²¹⁶ Newspapers and illustrated journals in both countries covered the events as they happened. Apart from the mass media, the French sources — mostly eyewitness memoirs or military histories, written shortly after the war or in the early 20th century, by veterans, military historians and officers involved in the colonial enterprise — are obviously partisan.²¹⁷ In the rare instances when French writers have chosen to comment on the Chinese record, it has been to ‘correct misconceptions’ as compared with their own as Lieutenant-Colonel Auguste Bonifancy did in his examination of a series of 31 Chinese paintings of the war that was exhibited in the 1931 colonial exhibition in Paris.²¹⁸ The Chinese records which include memorials to court, compendia of literary writings for the period and hagiographic biographies of notable figures are no more balanced.²¹⁹ Using the latter materials as their primary sources, historians of China have focused primarily on the diplomatic manoeuvres and the factions at different levels of officialdom as the

²¹⁵ Public Records Office MPK 441, FO 228/759.

²¹⁶ With the possible exception of Lung Chang 龍章, *Yuenan Zhongfa zhanzhen* 越南中法戰爭, Taipei: Taiwan Shangwu Yinshuguan, 1993, where he examined sources in both languages.

²¹⁷ See, for example, Huard, *La guerre du Tonkin*, Paris, 1887; Le Comte, 1890, 1895; Auguste Thomazi, *La conquête de l'Indochine*, Paris, 1934.

²¹⁸ Auguste Bonifancy and Exposition coloniale internationale de Paris, *A Propos d'une collection de peintures chinoises : représentant divers épisodes de la guerre franco-chinoise de 1884-1885 et conservées à l'Ecole française d'Extrême-Orient*, Hanoi: Impr. d'Extrême-Orient, Hanoi, 1931. These works are, however, not paintings as such but more like maps in the Chinese sense.

²¹⁹ Zhongguo Shixue hui, and Xunzheng Shao, *Zhong-Fa zhanzheng*. Shanghai: Xinzhishi Chubanshe, 1955; Guangxi Zhuangzu Zizhiqu Tongzhiguan and Guangxi Zhuangzu Zizhiqu Bowuguan, *Zhongfa zhanzheng diaocha ziliao shilu*, Nanning: Guanxi Renmin Chubanshe, 1982.

Qing court vacillated between appeasement and aggression.²²⁰ More recent popular histories have continued to couch the war within the 'China's century of shame' discourse.²²¹ Notwithstanding the biases, the brief account here attempts to provide a narrative from which the prints can be understood, pointing out some flashpoints in the war, its key sites (see maps of Tonkin and the Sino-French war in the Volume 2) and its 'heroes and villains'.

1. The Prelude to a War

The origins of the war are muddled as there was no clear declaration of war by either country. Moreover, the land battles did not take place on Chinese territory but in the area that the French would later refer to as Tonkin (present-day northern Vietnam). After annexing several southern provinces of Vietnam in 1862 to establish the colony of Cochinchina, the French turned their interests north. In the hope of establishing an overland trade route to China that would enable them to bypass the coastal treaty ports, French explorers carried out expeditions following the Red River to its source in Yunnan.²²² Renegade officers, firstly, Lieutenant de Vaisseau Francis Garnier (1839-73) and then Commandant Henri Rivière (1827-83), exceeded instructions and attempted to storm the citadel of Hanoi, with the latter succeeding in April 1882.²²³ Although Rivière returned the citadel to Hanoi, his actions had alarmed both the Vietnamese state, then ruled by the Nguyen dynasty (1802-1945), and the Chinese, who considered their southern neighbour as a vassal.

Initially the Vietnamese had relied on Liu Yongfu (劉永福, 1837-1917), a soldier-of-fortune and his Black Army to fend off the French. Liu, a native of Guangxi province, had been involved with a militia that claimed it had a commission from the Taipings. With their fall in the 1864, he fled to the mountains of northern Vietnam. With his ability to control the hostile tribesman, he proved useful to the Nguyen government. In 1869, he was co-opted into the Vietnamese army with the equivalent rank of military commander and established his base outside Son Tay, on the northern banks of the Red River.²²⁴ The Nguyen also

²²⁰ Lloyd E. Eastman, *Thrones and Mandarins : China's Search for a Policy During the Sino-French Controversy, 1880-1885*, Cambridge, Mass., 1967

²²¹ Zhou Zhichu, *Bu bai er bai: Zhongfa zhanzheng*, Nanjing: Jiangsu Renmin Chubanshe, 1998.

²²² Thomazi, pp. 105-07.

²²³ Ibid., pp. 116-31.

²²⁴ Lung Chang, p. 30.

sought Chinese support. China agreed to arm and support the Black Flags. In the summer of 1882, Qing troops from the Yunnan and Guangxi armies crossed the border into Tonkin, occupying several key towns including Langson, Bắc Ninh and Hong Hoa. In December, the French Minister to China, Frédéric Bourée, negotiated with Li Hongzhang to divide Tonkin into spheres of Chinese and French influence – without consulting the Vietnamese.²²⁵

Rivière refused appeasement and took matters into his own hands. On 27 March 1883, he captured the citadel of Nam Dinh. On the following day, Chef de Bataillon Berthe de Villers repulsed an attack by the Black Flags on Hanoi.²²⁶ For his insubordination, Rivière became an unlikely hero in France — the hawkish Republican government that had been installed in France under the leadership of Jules Ferry was strongly in favour of colonial expansion. Bourée's agreement was denounced and it became clear that the French were determined to place Tonkin under their protection.²²⁷ With a weak Vietnamese Army, it was left to the Black Flags to fight Rivière. On 10 May, Liu Yongfu issued a challenge that was pasted on the walls of Hanoi. The French set out to attack them at Cầu Giấy (lit. Paper Bridge, Ch. 紙橋, Fr. Pont de Papier) and were disastrously defeated counting Rivière and Villers among the casualties.²²⁸

On 20 August, Admiral Anatole-Amédée-Prosper Courbet (1827-85), recently been appointed to the command of the newly formed Tonkin Coasts Naval Division, stormed the forts that guarded Hué, the imperial capital. The Treaty of Hué concluded five days later placed Tonkin under French protection.²²⁹ Through August and September the French Expeditionary Forces continued to attack Black Flag positions along the Day River but with little success.²³⁰ Meanwhile, diplomatic discussions between French and Chinese authorities in Shanghai and Paris proved unhelpful. The Chinese refused to withdraw their garrisons at Son Tay, Bac Ninh and Langson as well as their support for Liu Yongfu.²³¹ As negotiations crumbled, war was imminent.

²²⁵ Ibid., pp. 90-91; Eastman, 1967, pp. 57-65.

²²⁶ Vice-amiral de Marolles, *La dernière campagne du Commandant Henri Rivière*, Paris, 1932, pp. 178-92; Huard, 26-30.

²²⁷ Eastman, pp. 62-69.

²²⁸ Thomazi, pp. 152-57.

²²⁹ Ibid., 165-66

²³⁰ Lung Chang, pp. 151-52; Thomazi, pp. 165-67.

²³¹ Eastman, pp. 76-87.

2. The Start of Hostilities

The French attacked Son Tay on 14 December 1883, suffering initial losses inflicted by the Black Flags. Putting their artillery in place, which they only used when the defenders were worn down, Courbet occupied the town on 16 December as Liu slipped away under the cover of darkness.²³² The turning point in the French quest for Tonkin came when General Charles-Théodore Millot replaced Courbet as commander for the land campaign in February 1884. The Expeditionary forces were boosted by reinforcements from the colonial forces in Africa and the Foreign Legion, taking their numbers to well over 10,000 men. They were organized in two brigades led by Louis Brière de l'Isle (1827-96), a former governor of Senegal and François de Négrier (1842-1913), a young general who had recently caught the public's attention for quelling an Arab rebellion in Algeria.²³³

Bac Ninh and its surrounding towns Hung Hoa, Thái Nguyên (Taiyuan shi) and Langson were targeted because about 20,000 men from the Guangxi Army were garrisoned in the area. Morale was low and the men were disinclined to obey their officers who were originally from the Anhui and Hunan Armies.²³⁴ In early March 1884, the French forces set out for Bac Ninh. Though outnumbered by the Guangxi troops, the city had fallen by 12 March. De Négrier, in particular, became known for his efficiency and for putting his troops through their paces. He entered Bac Ninh without waiting for Millot and de l'Isle and captured brand-new Krupp cannons and a large quantity of ammunition. Further French successes followed throughout the spring, including the Hung Hoa and Thái Nguyên.²³⁵

At Bac Ninh, most of the Chinese troops had fled. It proved to be an embarrassment for the Qing government and revealed the divide between factions agitating for war and for appeasement. In May, Dowager Empress Cixi ordered Li Hongzhang to commence a fresh round of negotiations with the French representative Captain François-Ernest Fournier. The Tianjin Accord concluded on 11 May 1884 recognized the French Protectorate over Annam and Tonkin and provided for the withdrawal of Chinese troops and the demarcation of the disputed

²³² Thomazi, pp. 171-77.

²³³ Ibid, 181-82.

²³⁴ Lung, 207-08.

²³⁵ Huard, pp. 252-76.

border between China and Vietnam.²³⁶ The Accord was unpopular in China and enforcement of the terms concerning withdrawal of Chinese troops proved problematic. On 17 May, Zhang Zhidong, the leader of the pro-war faction, was appointed Viceroy of Liangguang, putting him in charge of the armies stationed in Tonkin.²³⁷ He was supported by Cen Yuying (岑毓英, 1829-89), the Governor-General of Yunnan and Guizhou, an early advocate of 'covert' Qing interference in Vietnam who even sent in troops from his own provinces to support the Black Flags.²³⁸ Since no deadline was given for their withdrawal, the Qing troops continued to occupy their garrisons. On 23 June, a French column on its way to take over Langson was ambushed at Bac Le by the Guangxi Army. The incident known as 'the Bac Le Ambush' was met with fury in France and further requests for negotiations by China were refused.²³⁹

3. The War Begins in Earnest

In July, Courbet was ordered to take his Far East squadron to Fuzhou to await orders to commence action. On 5 August, French naval bombardment began in Keelung, Taiwan, where three shore batteries were destroyed. The expeditionary French forces that landed the next day were driven back by the imperial commissioner Liu Mingchuan and his troops. On 23 August, Courbet attacked the Chinese fleet and severely damaged the Fuzhou naval yards. The engagement, which came to be known as the 'Battle of Fuzhou' (or Battle of Pagoda Anchorage) and lasted a mere two hours, destroyed nine Chinese ships, including the corvette *Yangwu*, the flagship of the Fujian fleet.²⁴⁰ The significance of this battle and its visual impact is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 3. The Qing court officially declared war on France on 26 August.

The war was also fought along several sites in Vietnam (aided by the Black Flags), the South China coast and Taiwan. Admiral Courbet landed at Keelung on 1 October and would continue to enforce a blockade of the northern coast of Taiwan until the end of the war.²⁴¹ The refusal of Li Hongzhang to send his

²³⁶ Thomazi, pp. 189-92.

²³⁷ Lung Chang, pp. 222-26.

²³⁸ 'Tsen Yuying', Hummel, pp. 742-46. Davis, Bradley Camp. 'States of Banditry: The Nguyen Government, Bandit Rule, and the Culture of Power in the Post-Taiping China-Vietnam Borderlands', PhD thesis, University of Washington, 2008, pp. 273-85.

²³⁹ Lung Chang, pp. 243-45.

²⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 280-83.

²⁴¹ Bruce A. Ellman, *Modern Chinese Warfare, 1795-1989*, London, New York: Routledge, 2001, p. 89.

Northern fleet to assist the south ensured that the coastal waters would remain dominated by the French. Nevertheless, there were gains on both sides: while the French had arms technology on their side, the Chinese were able to inflict heavy losses on the French in close-quarter fighting, for example, during a French attack on the village of Kep.²⁴²

In late December 1884, the conflict had reached a crucial point when the French troops were mid-way between Hanoi and Langson at the Tonkin-China border: they faced the dilemma whether to consolidate their positions or to go on an all-out offensive to drive the Chinese out of Tonkin. The latter was decided and, after a month of preparation, the expeditionary forces began their march towards Langson under the leadership of Brière de l'Isle. Langson fell to the French on 13 February 1885, and the Chinese had been repelled to Zhen'nan-guan, the strategic pass at the Guangxi border.²⁴³ Zhen'nan-guan was under the watch of Cen Yuying, and, when China declared war, he even put forth an unrealized plan for the Black Flags to invade French Saigon.²⁴⁴ Outnumbered by the Chinese 25,000 to 1,500, the battle at Zhen'nanguan, which took place over 23 and 24 March, saw the French beat a retreat. The Chinese pursuit was slow and the French Second Brigade regained some lost ground at the Battle of Ky Lua. Their leader, de Négrier was seriously wounded and command was passed to Lieutenant-Colonel Paul-Gustave Herbinger. Without any pressure or interference from the Chinese, Herbinger ordered his troops to abandon Langson on 28 March. Two days later, the army of Pan Dingxin reoccupied Langson.²⁴⁵ While it was not exactly a military defeat for the French, it was interpreted as a victory for the Qing troops and commemorated as such **(see Fig. 2.26)**.

In France, the Ministry of Defence decided to release the contents of cables received from General Brière de l'Isle to the Chamber of Deputies. Herbinger's alarmist actions invited scorn and public outcry. Ferry's government fell the same day the Chinese returned to Langson. 'Retraite de Lang-Son' soon became the byword for military incompetence and the episode would reduce the French appetite for colonial expansion for several years to come. The Langson Retreat

²⁴² Lung Chang., pp. 329-30.

²⁴³ Jean Lecomte, *Lang-Son: combats, retraite et négociations*, Paris, 1895, pp. 288-305

²⁴⁴ Davis, pp. 304-05.

²⁴⁵ Ibid., pp. 501-12.

provided the Chinese with a 'face-saving opportunity' to bring the war to an end. In June 1885, a treaty was concluded where the Chinese government agreed to implement the Tianjin Accord, implicitly recognizing the French protectorate over Tonkin, and the French government dropped its longstanding demand for an indemnity for the Bac Le ambush.²⁴⁶

With the hindsight of time, the whole conflict may be perceived as a blunder of indecisiveness and an ignoble surrender on both the French and Chinese sides. Not surprisingly, it is a war that historians chose to forget. However, more layered readings of images, texts and objects related to the war show that the contemporary impressions were quite different. In both countries, indeed world-wide, it engendered a vibrant response in pictures and print.

III. The Pictorial Record: Visuality and the Dissemination of a Genre

It was a confluence of several things that gave the Sino-French War and its illustrators an identity and prominence previously not experienced by sheet-print artists or their creations. Advancements in transport, communications, print and other technologies brought the Qing empire within a global community where lines of communication and information were shared and circulated. The speed at which information could be transmitted and the bulk of production that mechanized presses brought served to heighten the sense of immediacy in reportage and fuel a greater public interest in the war.

From the Second Opium War to the Sino-French War, with the advent of the electric telegraph, the time taken to transmit information reduced dramatically, serving to heighten the sense of immediacy in news reportage. In 1860, *Times* correspondent Thomas Bowlby's report on the capture of the Dagu forts, which was sent out on 25 August, only appeared in the newspaper on 3 November. However, by 1873, news from China that was wired through Hong Kong could be published two days after dispatch.²⁴⁷ The telegraph had arrived in China two years before: lines were first laid in Hong Kong and then, despite Qing government prohibition, in the Shanghai area. In 1872, Septime Auguste Vigui r, a Frenchman

²⁴⁶ Eastman, Chapters 4 and 5; Immanuel C.Y. Hsu, 'Late Ch'ing foreign relations, 1866-1905' in *The Cambridge History of China, Vol. 11: Late Ch'ing, 1800-1911, Part 2*, Cambridge, 1980, pp. 96-101.

²⁴⁷ Bickers, pp. 163-64.

and customs officer, in Shanghai published the first Chinese telegraph code.²⁴⁸ In 1877, the first official telegraph line was established in China by Li Hongzhang between Tianjin and the forts at nearby Dagou and Beitang for military purposes. In 1881, the Imperial Chinese Telegraph Administration was established and by then lines in Tianjin and Shanghai linked the north and the south.²⁴⁹ As the war with the French seeped into the empire's consciousness in 1884, lines were then only being laid in Beijing. News bureaux, already wired to this system, received news from the front before the imperial bureaucracy, which relied on its old communication channels. As the veracity of Palace memorials took time to determine, even the court turned to the *Shenbao* newspaper to find out what was going on.²⁵⁰

Mechanized presses brought mass production and networks of transport through busy shipping and railway channels enabled information to be disseminated to a wider audience and geographical spread. As discussed in Chapter 3, European print formats like engravings had probably arrived before the Opium Wars, and the pictorial journals (which the Chinese later called *huabao* 畫報) soon after.²⁵¹ As early as the 1850s, English accounts describe the Chinese fascination with these 'foreign' pictures and how they were used: an *Illustrated London News* correspondent even found pages from his pictorial being used to decorate walls and junks!²⁵² There were several short-lived attempts to publish illustrated periodicals in the 1870s, which focused on pictures for children, and depictions of world events and scientific and industrial subjects.²⁵³ The Major brothers, Ernest and Frederick, who had established the *Shenbao* 申報 — widely regarded as China's first modern newspaper — in 1872, also attempted to set up a Western-style pictorial magazine in 1877 but after five issues which came out intermittently over a period of 3 years, the *Yinghuan Huabao* 瀛寰畫報 (*Worldwide*

²⁴⁸ Baark, Erik. *Lightning wires : the telegraph and China's technological modernization, 1860-1890*. Greenwood Press: Westport, 1997, pp. 84-85.

²⁴⁹ 'The First Telegraph Line in China', *New York Times*, 11 August 1877; 《清朝序文獻通考》, 卷 373, 郵傳考14。電政

²⁵⁰ Wagner, p. 126.

²⁵¹ The first issue of the world's first illustrated newspaper, *Illustrated London News*, appeared in 14 May 1842.

²⁵² *Illustrated London News*, 20 March 1858, p. 293 and 26 June 1858, p. 637; Bickers, pp. 166-67.

²⁵³ Britton, pp. 56-57

News) folded. The pictures featured had been the work of British illustrators in Britain.²⁵⁴

By the beginning of the Sino-French War, *Shenbao* was already a well-regarded newspaper. The *Shenbao* advertised itself as the first Chinese-language newspaper to feature field reports filed at short notice from the battlefields (by a Russian journalist).²⁵⁵ The paper's growing popularity ensured that reports on the latest troop movements, developments in battle, diplomatic negotiations and the French demands were avidly followed. However, the war was as much about words as it was about pictures. As Ernest Major himself observed: 'Recently now, because the Chinese court has decided to deploy its soldiers in the struggle between France and Vietnam, deep hatred for the enemy sweeps through the land. People who wish to do something good draw pictures about victories in this war, and they are bought and looked at in the market places, and quite easily become props for conversation.'²⁵⁶ The comment is telling for it not only suggests that the victory pictures were already well in circulation at the start of the war but implied that the public was ready for a different type of visual and print experience. In May 1884, the Major Brothers launched the *Dianshizhai Huabao* (點石齋畫報; hereafter *DSZHB*), a graphic publication not unlike the *Illustrated London News*. *DSZHB*'s first few issues were devoted to the Sino-French War and some scholars believe that the war had been a catalyst for the emergence of such a publication.²⁵⁷ While it was adapted from a Western format, it was distinguished by its use of original illustrations created by local artists and of lithography as its means of production.

At the time, the lithographic press, a planographic media, particularly suited to non-alphabetic and visual imagery, was already well established in Shanghai and the Major brothers were among its first recorded users. The inclusion of their printing plant, their Shenchang Calligraphy Studio and the *Shenbao* offices in Wu Youru's 1884 album *Shenjiang Shengjing tu* 申江勝景圖 as one of the marvels in the

²⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 69.

²⁵⁵ *Shenbao*, 6 February 1884

²⁵⁶ In the preface of the *Dianshizhai*'s inaugural issue: *jia* 甲, no.1, 'Preface', May 1884. Here Wagner's translation, p. 134.

²⁵⁷ Wang Qi and Lin Shuzhong have both used the term 'catalyst' (*daohuosuo* 導火索) in describing the emergence of the *Dianshizhai*. Wang, 'Dianshizhai huabao yu Zhong-Fa zhanzheng', *Dongnan wenhua*, 1990, No. 79 and Lin, 'Dianshizhai huabao yu Wu Youru', *Nanyi xuebao*, 1981, No. 2.

city, helped emphasize the sense of the new associated with the enterprise and made the medium a signifier of modernity (**Fig. 2.4**).²⁵⁸

Underscoring the persistent narrative of the Chinese absorption of new technology and the emergence of a public sphere, recent publications on the visuality and material culture of the Sino-French war have focused on the illustrations for the *DSZHB* pictorial as well as those in the Western media.²⁵⁹ For example, a 2008 exhibition in Fuzhou featuring a private Chinese collection presented the war solely from the perspective of Western, mostly French engravings and illustrations from *L'Figaro*, *L'Illustration*, *L'Univers Illustré*, *Le Monde Illustré*, etc.²⁶⁰ Even though it showed examples of Chinese prints which were reproduced in the French media, the text paid little attention to this indigenous phenomena other than to mention that it was a type of print that was now lost in China, and only 'accidentally' preserved through reproduction in French pictorial journals (**Fig. 2.5**).²⁶¹

The discussion in the ensuing sub-sections will attempt to exhume the victory picture from the mass of visual materials and printed formats that have been created around the war. It relocates the victory picture within the contexts of sheet-print production and the vocabulary of traditional print illustration. It also explores the changing role of artists and illustrators involved in their creation and the responses to the challenges of modernity that can be read in them. As such, these prints will be introduced in a thematic way and not according to the chronology of the events they may possibly depict.

The prints of the Sino-French war that form the basis of discussion are taken from an album of 48 items in the Bibliothèque Nationale (hereafter 'BN').²⁶² Collected by M. Fradin de Belabre, a vice-consul who was in China at the time of the

²⁵⁸ Wu Youru, *Shenjiang Shengjing tu*, Shanghai, 1884, 2 vols, shang juan, p. 60.

²⁵⁹ See Wagner, pp. 103-73; Guoli Taiwan Bowuguan, *Xizai fan: Qing Fa zhan zheng yu Taiwan tezhan* 西仔反：清法戰爭與台灣特展, Taipei, 2003; Zhongguo Min-Taiyuan bowuguan, Qin Feng, Qin Feng xiyang banhua guan, *Xi yang tong ban hua yu Zhong Fa zhan zheng* (Western engravings and etchings and Sino-French War), Fuzhou: Fujian Jiaoyu Chubanshe, Fuzhou, 2008.

²⁶⁰ Zhongguo Min-Taiyuan Bowuguan, et al., 2008.

²⁶¹ Ibid., pp. 60-61.

²⁶² Liste des estampes relatives à la guerre franco-chinoise de 1885 [Oe 173 (pet. folio)]. I am indebted to Danielle Eliasberg for her help in locating this album. There were difficulties in tracing the album since intriguingly it was classified under the section 'costums'. While there is no record of the exact date the album entered the library, a catalogue by Henri Cordier on its collection of Chinese albums published in 1909 already mentions this item 'Catalogue de Albums Chinois et Des Ouvrages Relatifs a la Chine', in *Journal Asiatique*, 1909.

conflict, the contents attest to the range of Chinese depictions illustrating the war: it comprises sheet prints produced by woodblock and lithography in varying sizes, some with hand-applied colour and even pictures in serial formats (*lianhuan tu* 連環圖). As the material entered these collections within a decade or two of the events depicted, they are reliable in terms of dating, and can be considered as representative of the pictorial forms then in circulation.²⁶³ It also represents a rare instance when popular prints were intentionally brought together on the basis of specific subject-matter, in this case, an important political and military event of the day.²⁶⁴

1. *An Enduring Tradition*

Within the BN album, there are 39 sheet prints, mostly woodblocks, suggesting the dominance of this medium and format in the visual representations of the Sino-French War. According to the rubric on some of these prints, they were made in or distributed through the Shanghai-Suzhou nexus, with connections to other metropolitan areas in China like Canton and Fuzhou, indicating a revival and expansion of popular print production in the Jiangnan region after the Taiping destruction, and new networks of print circulation encouraged by the treaty port environment. The woodblock prints in the album are varied in style ranging from simple, diagrammatic renditions to sophisticated, near realistic representations. Some prints are coloured but mostly in a primary palette of red, blue, yellow and green.

Judging from the dates found on some of the inscriptions, the earliest editions were knocked off quite quickly after reports of battles were received. The earliest dates from the second month of the *jiashen* 甲申 year in the Guangxu reign (March 1884) (see Fig. 2.9)²⁶⁵, predating the first *DSZHB* illustrations by at least two months. However, unlike the historical texts, which with the benefit of hindsight are organized around key sites, battles or events, the names and places

²⁶³ This is relevant as in recent years the efforts to revive *nianhua* as a craft in some regional centres of production have seen the reproductions of sheet prints using older blocks, even some with dates from the Guangxu period (see, for example, *Suzhou chuantong ba hua Taiwan shoucang zhan*, exh. cat., Taipei: Xingzhengyuan Wenhua Jianshe Weiyuanhui and Taipei Shili Meishuguan, 1987). The only way of telling them apart is by examining the prints themselves – colour pigments and paper quality are different.

²⁶⁴ The focus of early Western collectors like the Jesuits at Xujiahui, Édouard Chavannes, V. M. Alekseev, Jean-Pierre Dubosc and Berthold Laufer was usually on print as a craft and as a reflection of popular religion, beliefs and folk practices; consequently they collected to reflect the range in regional style and subject-matter.

²⁶⁵ Reproduced in *The Illustrated London News*, 17 May 1884, p. 477.

referred to in these prints are somewhat limited. The land scenes primarily feature Sontay, Liu Yongfu's stronghold; Hue (Ch. 順化), the Vietnamese imperial capital, and Bac Ninh, Hong Hoa and Langson, areas where Qing troops were garrisoned (see marked on the Map of Tonkin, Volume 2). While the naval scenes focus on the engagements in Keelung and Fuzhou. As corroborated by *Shenbao* reports from the end of 1883 until 1885, these sites were persistent flashpoints of popular interest in a war fought on terrain that was largely unfamiliar to the Chinese public. Even for the highly literate readers of the *Shenbao*, the Majors had provided a lithograph map as a supplement to give readers a sense of the geography of Vietnam.²⁶⁶

Some prints are generic, not site-specific, merely mentioning victory over the French or celebrating the exploits of Liu and his Black Flag Army. As can be seen from several of the titles, these prints were intended to be viewed as victory pictures (**Fig. 2.6**). Albeit located in a construction of the 'present' rather than the emperor's commemorative past, I do not think they are 'newspaintings' as defined by Rudolf Wagner, nor should they be judged for their inaccuracies of fact as historians of text have done. Close, comparative and contextual readings of some examples all suggest links to the imperial *desheng tu* as well as popular literature and theatre. The ensuing discussion will demonstrate that prints from this group adhere to the requirements of the victory-picture genre in terms of their format, compositional elements, and narrative episodes.

The most obvious link to the imperial victory-picture print is the distinctive horizontal, rectangular format, which in today's digital-print terminology we would describe as a 'landscape' as opposed to a 'portrait' format. Though widely used in European prints since the late 15th century, the 'landscape' format appears not to be used in printmaking in China before the Qing court took an interest in perspectival depictions and copper-plate printing in the 18th century.²⁶⁷ However, it may be surmised that such European prints had circulated in some metropolitan areas in China by the turn of the 17th century as landscape forms in the works of some painters in Nanjing, Yangzhou and Hangzhou could be detected as resembling engravings from the great atlas

²⁶⁶ *Shenbao*, 10 February 1884

²⁶⁷ I am grateful to Wang Cheng-hua for sharing her observations on the absence of this type of format in her ongoing extensive study of the Gusu prints.

Civitates orbis terrarum by Georg Braun and Franz Hogenberg.²⁶⁸ Yoshida Haruki makes a particularly striking comparison between *A Thousand Peaks and Myriad Ravines*, the famous painting by Gong Xian 龔賢 (1618-89) and *Alhama* by Georgius Hoefnagle (1542-1600) (**Fig. 2.7**).²⁶⁹

For the purposes of this discussion, however, the characteristics to note from Hoefnagle's work are the horizontal, rectangular format, the clearly demarcated frame and the central position of the title piece often in the form of a plaque. In the 19th century, these features found expression in popular sheet prints from the Suzhou-Shanghai region, where both plain and ornamental borders were also employed (**see Figs 2.5 and 2.8**). These 'landscape' formats came in varying sizes and were referred to singly as *hengpi* 橫披 or as *shenpi* 申披, a large sheet that quartered into four horizontal-format prints.²⁷⁰ From the viewpoint of *nianhua* production, the *hengpi* was described as 'unusual' when compared to other formats for auspicious pictures like the vertical (*shupi* 豎批), paired vertical (*duiping* 對屏) and square forms (*fangzi* 方子 and *doufang* 斗方).²⁷¹ It is also telling of the format's distinctive origins that *hengpi* were colloquially referred to in late Qing Suzhou as *yanghua* 洋畫 (lit. foreign pictures).²⁷² It became a format that was reserved for the depiction of current events (*shishi* 時事) like the Sino-French war, literary and dramatic scenes, and novelty subjects like the fantastical creatures in the *Shanhai jing* 山海經 (*Canon of Mountains and Seas*) (**Fig. 2.8**).²⁷³ Not surprisingly, as will be discussed later, formalistic aspects and visual tropes from these categories of illustration could also be detected in the victory-picture prints.

Unlike their imperial counterparts who could work with a range of talent, formats and media, producers of popular sheet prints were necessarily subject to

²⁶⁸ Yoshida Haruki, 'Seiyoga no eikyo o uketa Shindai zenki kaiga—Nankin, Yoshu, Kosu no gaka o chushin ni', in Aoki and Kobayashi, 1995, pp. 136-44.

²⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 137.

²⁷⁰ Today, *hengpi* is a common format for *guohua* (modern ink painting).

²⁷¹ Zhu Junzhou, 'Guancang nianhua lai yuan ji qi chuanjiaoshi yanjiu shiye shuping', in Shanghai Tushuguan, 2000, pp. 3, 9.

²⁷² Based on oral histories from surviving craftsmen who worked in the print industry in Suzhou recorded by Ling Xu in the late 1950s (Ling Xu and Jin Kaifan, 'Suzhou Taohuawu muke nianhua zhong de gaitou huanmian nongxu zuojia', <http://suzhou.19lou.com/forum-922-thread-26304820-1-1.html>, posted 11 March 2010, accessed 30 June 2013).

²⁷³ Ling Xu, 'Taohuawu muban nianhua de zhixi fenbu ji yishu xingshi, fengge teshe', in *Shanghai Gongyi Meishu*, 2010:4 (<http://qkzz.net/article/29444f25-2d51-4b48-b880-92838e3f7782.htm>, accessed 30 June 2013).

commercial considerations such as the cost and availability of materials and skilled labour. This difference can be seen in how a compositional device like the snaking-line device discussed in Chapter 1 is interpreted in these sheet prints. At the top right corner of *General Liu Defends Bac Ninh* (劉提督鎮守北甯圖), the Black Flags are shown tightly packed together, streaming out of Bac Ninh's gates, and led, according to the captions, by Liu and his son (**see Fig. 2.9**). From the bottom right, the French infantry are shown at the forefront as if on parade, accompanied by a drummer and an assortment of fantastical animals, with the cavalry bringing up the rear. As they wend their way round the Guizi Mountains – here represented by a series of flattish hillocks – the adversaries confront each other somewhere in middle ground. Liu's army have charged forward amidst puffs of smoke (from cannon or gun fire). While victory is not expressly mentioned, it can be assumed from the larger pictorial space allocated to the Black Flags, and from the aggressive posture of the mounted Qing soldiers holding rifles and bows, as well as the fleeing French soldiers.

Like the imperial pictures, the snaking line is also used here to express a sense of the mass of troops moving over space and time. However, its rendering is not illusionistic and, as such, the viewer's realization of this effect does not come directly from the eye but from an understanding of pictorial convention. Thus, although the view is intended to suggest a panorama, the scenery, structures, people and objects have been rendered in a diagrammatic manner adhering to common visual vocabulary used in printed books and manuals. These prints were also clearly restrained by the standard sizes of commercial paper — the large *hengpi* format (measuring 35 x 60 centimetres) was almost a third smaller than the imperial prints (average measurement 55 x 90 centimetres).²⁷⁴ Restricted by the paper's width, instead of the vertical build-up of mountain forms and streams of soldiers, the hills have been pulled long and low. The pictorial space has thus been divided laterally into a series of parallel space-cells set on the diagonal from the top right corner to the bottom left corner.

It is evident that the support troops from the French colonies and the Tonkin Naval Division were a point of curiosity as indicated by references in this

²⁷⁴ For precise measurements of each set, see Weng Lianxi, *Qingdai Gongting Banhua*, Beijing: Wenwu Chubanshe, 2001, pp. 290-94.

and other and other prints in the BN album to the 'African army' (亞非利加兵隊) and the 'French marines' (法蘭西水師兵隊). The short open-fronted jackets, oriental headgear, baggy trousers and flamboyant sashes of the Turcos are only suggested in the stick-like figures. And the *fusiliers-marin* are shown in red rather than the correct blue coats. Here, it is the labelling that assists in instructing the audience. As a distinctive, codified form of depiction, *General Liu Defends Bac Ninh* stands in stark alterity not only to the same subject depicted in the *DSZHB* (**Fig. 2.20**) but also to French engravings and news illustrations (Figs 2.10 and *Prise de Sontay* in **2.21**). The comparisons serve to highlight the gulf between these victory pictures and not only the reality but also 'realistic' representations associated with modernity. *The Capture of Bac Ninh*, a well-known French illustration of the time shows a close-up of the soldiers in close combat (**Fig. 2.10**). This time, it is the Qing troops that are shown in flight; while careful attention had been paid to the accurate depiction of the French uniforms, the Chinese soldiers as the 'other' had here been stereotyped and appear more like chinoiserie figures with their pointed straw hats and hanging moustaches.

Many of the prints are multi-scenic as well as generic incorporating the essential elements of the victory narratives such as a primary protagonist (almost always Liu Yongfu), the dispatch of the troops and officers to war, the confrontation between the adversaries, the return of the triumphant army and the presentation of prisoners of war. In *Liu's Army Captures Sontay – The Complete Picture of a Great Victory* (劉軍克復宣泰大獲全圖), troops are also shown streaming out of a series of hills (**Fig. 2.11.a**). Here the hills not only serve as scene dividers but they also serve as inscribed cartouches containing information and verse that assists in directing the narrative. It is a device associated with earlier 18th century Suzhou prints depicting popular dramas like the *Romance of the Western Chamber* (*Xixiangji* 西廂記) and the *Pipaji* (琵琶記), where rocks and architecture often served the same function.²⁷⁵ While having a practical purpose within the illustrated narrative depicted, the inscribed cliff-faces also allude to the historical practice of writing on stone and stele faces (*moya shike* 摩崖石刻).²⁷⁶

²⁷⁵ See Aoki and Kobayashi, 1995, p. 399 (*Jasmine Flower Song*), p. 404-07 (*Xixiang ji*), p. 409 (*Pipa Ji*).

²⁷⁶ See Robert E. Harrist, Jr., *The Landscape of Words: Stone Inscriptions from Early and Medieval China*, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008.

Here, the narrative flows in an arc that begins from the top left corner down to the bottom right before ending at the bottom left (**see diagram, Fig. 2.11.b**). Following the alphabetical markers on the diagram, the scenes and verses are as follows:

A. Shows troops emerging from the city gates of Sontay and Lin in his tent: ‘On [Liu’s] second outing leading the troops, he gained Bac Ninh; The French are decimated in one fell swoop; The King trembles with fear and surrenders to Liu’s troops.’

B. Describes a scene at Guizhi Mountain: ‘As Liu’s troops fired, their cannons thundered; The Fourth Route Army came out to fight; The French soldiers had nowhere to turn; They fled with nothing but their lives.’

C. Identifies some of the leaders in army: Zhu Tianbao, Liu Long and Liu Hu (perhaps sons of the general?), Pei Tianlong and others named Han and Liu. Troops riding ahead with flags emblazoned with the surnames of leaders Zhu, Huang, Pei, Han and Liu.

D. Depicts a scene at a fort in Doukou Mountains, with the cannons facing the battlefield: ‘To scold/curse the French, we really need not; Our soldiers fates have already been determined. Bac Ninh was falsely let go, but capturing Sontay was the true intention.’

E. Depicts an army of female warriors and alludes to Liu’s daughter (a recurring theme in the General Liu myth): ‘The magical woman warrior Liu Saijin 劉賽金 is better than Mu Guiying 穆桂英 of the Great Song.’

F. This verse refers to an event beyond the picture frame – announcing that Liu Yi (Liu Yongfu’s son?) reported his victory to the court; Governor general[?] Meng commended General Liu; and the officials and people look forward to a peaceful spring.

The role of the text is as important as the imagery in giving impetus to the narrative. Also scattered throughout the print are labels identifying the French troops as well as some of the key Chinese and Black Flag officers in this early part of the war. Sontay had fallen to the French early in the campaign and Bac Ninh, according to Liu in a public challenge delivered to the French, had been left out of pity because of the continuous loss of face by the French in previous battles.²⁷⁷

The narrative appears to focus on some of the more dramatic elements in the story of Liu Yongfu and the Black Flags reflecting perhaps popular on-ground sentiment about the events in Vietnam. Nevertheless, gaps remain in the story, leaving room for conjecture: for example, it is not clear if Liu Yongfu really had a daughter named Liu Saijin, but it is even less likely that she would have fought alongside her father in his many battles. However, the model of the woman warrior in Chinese culture is a persistent one that stretches as far back as antiquity to Fu Hao 婦好 of the Shang dynasty. The comparisons with Mu Guiying, a member of the famous Yang family of generals (Yang jia jiang 楊家將) in the Song period would have been natural since theatrical performances based on episodes of bravery and loyalty by both men and women in this family were popular especially in Shanghai. The Yang family was also a popular subject for sheet-prints as can be seen in this print where the matriarch orders the women in the family to continue the fight against the Xixia when all the men have died (**Fig. 2.12**). Here it is not an iconic scene that is depicted but the entire cast laid out for the viewers, inviting them to interpret and tell the stories to each other. Given that theatrical prints and victory pictures were of the same format, it would not have been improbable if they were displayed together in the communal settings not unlike the hostel and the public poster board shown in **Figures 2.13a and 13b**, where people gathered and looked at such pictures together. This perhaps confirms Major's observation that these prints, since they were meant for display, had an interactive element relying on the audience to comment upon and embellish.

The nature of the audience interaction with the sheet prints could thus be described as passive when compared to other objects that the visual and material culture of war with China generated elsewhere. At the height of the French public

²⁷⁷ *North China Herald*, 26 March 1884, p. 351, translated from a *Shenbao* report; Wagner, p. 123.

interest in their nation's colonial enterprise, the range of toy soldiers that was being produced included sailors wearing uniforms in use during the Sino-French War (**Fig. 2.14**). Earlier, when the French had assisted in the successful taking of Canton in 1858, a children's game *Prise de Canton* was brought out to celebrate the event: A miniature cannon was used to blast through thirty lithographed blocks depicting the walls of Canton, and the key figures were represented by paper cut-outs (**Fig. 2.15**).²⁷⁸ These toys and games had a greater participative element, allowing aspiring young soldiers to actively recreate their own victories. The European consumer unlike his Chinese counterpart had the opportunity to become more than a mere bystander.

Other literary and theatrical conventions could be seen in the BN prints and these included capitulation and siege scenes. *Capture of the French Enemies* (*Zhuona Fani* 捉拿法逆) is an interpretation of the classic capitulation scene (**Fig. 2.16**). The sign on top of a watchtower in the distant left corner identifies the location as Hung Hoa, the site of a devastating Black Flag defeat, and as such, the scene is entirely fictional, conforming to requirements of the victory narrative. The print is not coloured but the illustration is striking in its dramatic concentric curves; ranks of braves encircle the encampment of officials who watch as French prisoners are brought chained and struggling to be beheaded before them. The drawing has been largely made with fine lines, punctuated by the thick, dark strokes used for the upright rifles and spears of the braves and the black boots of the French. As if to echo these emphases, the title and inscription are rendered in readable writing that closely resemble clerical script in its boxiness and strong sweeping horizontal strokes. The date (Guangxu jiashen wuyue sanhuan 光緒甲申五月三澣)²⁷⁹ in a formal form found in official documents and private writings, as opposed to the Western dating that newspapers had started to use, lends a historical feel. While the gravitas given by the presence of a literati-style name, Gentleman of the Pine River (Songjiang shi 松江氏) is balanced by the contemporary reference to Guangdong (粵東館次) that suggests its place of origin. The whole effect

²⁷⁸ Jeffrey W. Cody and Frances Terpak, 'Through a Foreign Glass: The Art and Science of Photography in Late Qing China', in Cody and Terpak (eds), *Brush and Shutter: Early Photography in China*, Hong Kong and Los Angeles: Hong Kong University Press and the Getty Research Institute, 2011, p. 52.

²⁷⁹ Refers to the division of the month into three 10-day cycles.

is one of staginess resembling the tableau seen in theatrical prints like the one depicting the Yang family (see Fig. 2.12).

While the *Victory Picture of the Liu's Troops Capturing Bac Ninh* (*Liu jun kefu Beining desheng tu* 劉軍克復北甯得勝圖) maybe somewhat less sophisticated than the 'Victory at Daliyi' from the imperially commissioned *Pacification of Taiwan* series, the message is clear as is its rendition of the classic siege scene (see the comparison between **Figs 2.17.a and 2.17.b**). As the text in **Figure 2.17.a** explains, Liu Yongfu has utilized a familiar military strategy, the 'ruse of an empty city' (用計設空城), one of the *36 Stratagems* (*Sanshiliu ji* 三十六計) listed in the *Book of Qi* (*Qishu* 齊書). It was also well-known in Chinese literature and drama, most notably in the *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* (*Sanguo yanyi* 三國演義), at the Battle of Han River (*Hanshui zi zhan* 漢水之戰) where Cao Cao became a victim of this ruse. According to the inscription: the French, overjoyed by their gains, did not pay heed to the soldiers who came from all four directions to overwhelm them; they were set on fire and left fleeing for their lives.²⁸⁰

The Slaughter of Admiral Courbet in the Battle of Fuzhou (馬尾江刀劈孤拔福州捷報), as described by its title, depicts an entirely fictitious event that fits well within the conventional understanding of the victory narrative (**Fig. 2.18**). The visuality of the print and the significance of its motifs will be explored later in Chapter 3 in the context of maritime depictions, but for now, the focus will be on the rubric. It is provocative as an example of how printmakers and distributors could manipulate the viewer's understanding of the print as an object. My examination of the original revealed that it is a woodblock print. However, three red stamps superimposed after the inking process suggest not only a provenance for its manufacture but also an alternative orientation for its media. According to the two stamps to the left of the print, it is a Western-style copper-plate print made at the battle site in Fuzhou and sent to Shanghai for distribution.²⁸¹ Another stamp on the right goes even further: assuring viewers that it is an 'authentic copper-plate print, no colour added' (*zhenzheng tongban li bu zhuose* 真正銅板例不着色). These claims not only make allusions to the original *desheng tu* but they also imply a

²⁸⁰ Ibid. The commentary in the opening illustration of the inaugural *DSZHB* issue repeats this event. (See Fig. 2.20, *DSZHB*, *jia* 1, p. 3).

²⁸¹ a. 福州銅版洋圖局；在撫院橋南，林宅畫圖房
b. 盐[?]公堂內批發；仍寄上海城內

privileging of pictorial form and media within the popular print culture of the period.

A comparison with another print of the same style and format, but this time coloured, can tell us something about the latitude with which prints were created, adapted and marketed (see Figs 2.18 and 2.19). We can safely attribute both prints to the same source of production as the pictures are rendered with a similar style and they both bear the same distributor's print (see footnote 280b). With its main title *Zhenhai*, referring to the coastal town within the prefecture of Ningbo, and its block of hurriedly carved text, **Figure 2.19** appears like a news-sheet reporting on an incident and indeed that may have been the original intention.

At the end of February 1885, Admiral Courbet had arrived in Zhenhai to enforce a blockade to prevent rice from leaving Shanghai. On 1 March, the Chinese shore batteries and warships had opened fire on the French squadron inviting an exchange. What happened in subsequent days differs greatly in French and Chinese accounts. Courbet decided it would be unwise to attack the shore batteries and ultimately the happenings at Zhenhai are regarded as a minor one-day skirmish in French sources.²⁸² In Chinese sources, however, it is celebrated as one of the significant victories of the Sino-French War, a three-day event that had the French as the aggressor and the Chinese as the defenders.²⁸³

As the text in the *Zhenhai* print relates, Courbet was injured in the fighting and three French ships were damaged in the battle. Three vessels are depicted in the print: the *Bayard* (*Baya'er* 巴亞耳) and the *Triomphant* (*Deliyongfen* 德利用芬) are seen attacking the shoreline and the *Nielly* (*Niuhuili* 牛回利) is sinking (obviously inconsistent with the previous print announcing that Courbet had been killed in the Battle of Fuzhou!). A subtitle *Ningbo Victory Picture* (*Ningbo desheng tu* 寧波得勝圖) was stamped on after printing had been completed. Unlike the print in Figure 2.18 that makes an oblique reference to its identity through the claim that it is a copper-plate print, there is no mistaking that this work is a victory picture. Although it is not very clear if the stamp was added as an afterthought or somewhat later, a hagiography grew rapidly around Zhenhai as a major site of victory, helped later by the raising of a commemorative plaque and the publication

²⁸² Maurice Loir, *L'escadre de l'amiral Courbet*, Paris: Berger-Levrault et cie, 1886, pp. 245-64, 271-84.

²⁸³ Lung Chang, p. 328.

of *Jinji tanhui* 金雞談薈 an account of this incident by Ouyang Lijian (1824-95), the general in charge of the defence of Zhenhai.²⁸⁴ Till today, part of the battery and several cannons remain as a monument to the victorious Battle of Zhenhai still couched in the anti-imperialist, century of shame discourse.

The popular sheet-prints discussed in this section were clearly victory pictures not just because they were so entitled, but also because of their sentiment. However, unlike the imperial versions that made attempts at more realistic and perspectival representations of the scene, these were primarily assembled using a range of pictorial and literary conventions, and allusions to popular history, theatre and folk culture.

2. The Rise of the Celebrity Illustrator

Signed inscriptions by the Gentleman of the Pine River (Songjiang shi 松江氏) or the Eremite of the Plum Prefecture²⁸⁵ (Meizhou yinshi 梅州隱士) gave these popular victory pictures the impression that there was an individual —and a lettered one at that— behind the work.²⁸⁶ Nevertheless, it remains unclear if these were real or imagined people. From looking at the prints, it also remains ambiguous as to their role in production: was the person merely the calligrapher of the inscription (as the emperor Qianlong was in the imperial prints), was he the observer that had reported on the event, or was he the illustrator who had designed the print?

Here I suggest that it was with the publication of the *Dianshizhai huabao* that the public became aware that there was an individual not just a workshop behind the creation of the printed picture as every illustration in the pictorial was accompanied by a signature and seals. It gave the profession of being an illustrator a certain cachet. The coterie of artists who worked on the *DSZHB* included Wu Youru 吳友如 (d. 1893), Tian Zilin 田子琳 (act. 1870s-90s?), Zhang Zhiying 張志贏 (act. 1880s) and Zhou Muqiao 周慕樵 (1868-1923). Although few biographical details are known about them today, traces of their names and signatures suggest

²⁸⁴ Ouyang Lijian, *Jinji tanhui*, 1889; see also http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Zhenhai (accessed 28 June 2013). Ouyang Lijian's account mentions only the *Bayard* and the *Nielly* but makes a hero out of an artillery officer Wu Jie 吳杰 who defied orders to fire on the French.

²⁸⁵ In Guangdong province.

²⁸⁶ Meizhou Yinshi's name comes up in numerous prints from the Sino-French War and the Sino-Japanese War. So far I have not been able to ascertain his identity. It might be an allusion to several open letters written by Meihua Yuyin (Fishing Eremite of the Plum Blossom) to the former Viceroy of Liangjiang Peng Yulin (1816-90) about the disgraced general Zhang Peilun (1848-1903), the commander at Fuzhou (Aying, comp., *Zhongfa zhanzhen wenxue ji*, Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1957, p. 23, n. 1).

that their activities ranged from the craftsman-like (in association with *nianhua* production in Taohuawu, Suzhou) to the artistic and from the activist to the entrepreneurial. While only ink-and-brush paintings by Wu survive²⁸⁷, the collective output of this group spanned the visual media that defined popular culture in the late Qing and early Republican period, from sheet prints (in woodblock and lithography) to illustrated pictorials to advertisements and calendar posters.²⁸⁸ Wu and Tian, in particular, achieved a certain celebrity with their illustrations during the Sino-French war.

Today, Wu Youru is probably the most celebrated of the group. He is the only one who rates a mention in Yang Yi's *Ink Forests of Shanghai* (*Haishang Molin* 海上墨林, preface dated 1911), the compendia of artists active in the city during the Qing period.²⁸⁹ A reconstruction of his life will not be attempted here as various scholars and writers have already done so before.²⁹⁰ Suffice to say, the short autobiographical note that Wu wrote as a preface for the *Feiyingge Huace* 飛影閣畫冊, a pictorial publication he established in 1893 is revealing as to how Wu himself chose to construct his artistic identity. Although he begins by making references to the masters of antiquity such as Gu Kaizhi, Wang Wei and Su Shi, it is not through claiming lineage from them that he establishes his credentials. Rather he situates himself unmistakably in his present, aligning himself with new media like the *DSZHB*, more current events like the Taiping rebellion and political figures like Zeng Guoquan 曾國荃 (1824-90). To quote (using Wagner's translation):

‘I liked them [the Western illustrated papers] at first sight ... It so happened that the *Dianshizhai* was the first to publish [an illustrated paper] and they asked me to illustrate them. The connoisseurs all found that the illustrations

²⁸⁷ In the collection of the Shanghai Museum. I am grateful to Ling Lizhong for assisting in arranging access to these paintings.

²⁸⁸ Zhou Muqiao, who had been Wu's assistant in the Taiping pictures project and later at the *Feiyingge Huabao*, began to focus on advertisements after 1905 and was responsible for some of the earliest advertisement calendars (*yuefenpai*). See Laing, *Selling Happiness: Calendar Posters and Visual Culture in Early-Twentieth-Century Shanghai*, Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2004, pp. 95-100.

²⁸⁹ Yang Yi (with annotation by Chen Zhengqing). *Haishang Molin*. 1989 reprint, Shanghai: Shanghai Guji Chubanshe, p. 78. (Annotation mentions his association with the *Dianshizhai* and the rest of its artists by name)

²⁹⁰ See, for example, Zhang Hongxing, 1999; Pan Yaocang, 'Cong Suzhou dao Shanghai, cong "Dianshizhai" dao "Feiyingge"—wan Qing huajia xintai guankui', *Xin meishu*, 1994:2, pp. 65-72; Gong Chanxing, 'Xinwen huajia Wu Yuoru — jiantan Wu Youru yanjiu zhong de jige wenti', *Meishu shi lun*, 1990:4, pp. 68-75 and 'Wu Youru jianlun', in *Meishu yanjiu* 59, 1990:3, pp. 30-38.

I had done were not bad at all. ... Shortly thereafter, I accepted an assignment by Zeng [Guoquan], the Guardian of the Heir Apparent, to paint pictures of the military successes of meritorious officials in suppressing the Cantonese rebels (= the Taipings). After their completion, the [pictures] were submitted to the imperial gaze [of Cixi] and happily enough met with august appreciation.’²⁹¹

The commission began in the Spring of 1886, Wu working with his assistant Zhou Muqiao completed 12 paintings of battle scenes and 48 meritorious portraits in early December.²⁹² According to Wu, by the time he returned to Shanghai, his fame had become such that gentleman were beating a path to his door requesting for pictures to be made.²⁹³ However, Wu appears to have exaggerated the importance of his commission from Zeng Guoquan. Although some of Wu’s works were submitted to court, it is not likely Cixi ever saw them. They certainly did not form part of the official series of paintings celebrating the victory over the Taiping rebels, created under the leadership of the Bannerman painter Qingkuan 慶寬 (1848-1927). Zeng’s commission was probably in response to a request from the court to provide ‘base compositions’ (*diben* 底本) as a source of factual information for the court painters to work on.²⁹⁴ Yet as this ‘Preface’ demonstrates, his reputation did not suffer.²⁹⁵

An examination of some of Wu’s extant work—both painting and printed matter—together with contemporary primary sources enables us to discover how war made the trajectory of celebrity possible for a jobbing illustrator like Wu in the late Qing period. Before the Sino-French War, Wu was likely an obscure

²⁹¹ Wu Youru, ‘Feiyingge huace xiaoqi’, *Feiyingge Huace* 1, August 1893, p. 1; Wagner, pp. 129-30

²⁹² Zhang, 1999, p. 13.

²⁹³ Wu, 1893.

²⁹⁴ As suggested by Hongxing Zhang from his reading of court documents and correspondence between Zeng Guoquan and Li Hongzhang. In any case, not all of Wu’s works were submitted to the court. Li and eventually Prince Yihuan made the final decisions on the selection of scenes (Zhang, 2000, pp. 291-93). See also Zhang, 1999, Chapter 6.

²⁹⁵ From 24th July 1888 until 2nd July 1889, a series of 16 lithographic prints depicting the Hunan army’s suppression of the Taiping rebels was issued together issues of the *DSZHB*. These were in the form of broadsheets pullouts attached to the front page of the pictorial. As an advertisement in *Shenbao*, the pictorial’s sister publication proclaimed, its purpose was to inform the world of China’s glorious military strength. At least two to three further editions of these prints assembled in book form exist. I have examined two versions: *Pingding Yuefei Gongchen Zhanji tu fu tiyong* was published in 1894, edited by Ai Yangchun; *Ziguang ge Gongchen Tuxiang; Xiangjun Pingding Yuefei zhantu fuhou* was brought out in 1901 edited by Xu Shujun of Changsha. The authoritative bibliography of the Taiping by Zhang Xiumin and Wang Huian lists a further version dated 1900 titled *Ziguang ge Gongchen xiaoxiang Xiangjun Pingding Yuefei zhantu* was brought out by Peng Hongnian (Zhang and Wang, eds, *Taiping Tianguo ziliao mulu*, Shanghai: Renmin Chubanshe, 1957, p. 83).

artist with links to the Shanghai-Suzhou popular print industry. Several prints as well as some early *DSZHB* illustrations still carried the prefix ‘Guwu 古吳’ which was associated with printmakers and also suggested his Suzhou origins. His earliest dated surviving work is an 1878 triptych depicting the auspicious motif of 100 boys playing in a garden (now in the Shanghai Museum)²⁹⁶ and a sheet print of acrobats at the Yuyuan bearing his name that Hongxing Zhang has attributed as an early sketch.²⁹⁷ Despite the differences in media both appear at best workman-like. A reference to his status as a lowly artisan-painter (*huagong* 畫工) is to be found on an 1880 documentary painting commemorating a Western-style banquet the Shanghai Daotai had thrown for the Prussian prince Heinrich.²⁹⁸

According to Ye Xiaoqing, Major had taken up the idea of a Chinese pictorial after successfully publishing works by a number of artists including Wu’s woodblock prints depicting the defeat of Henri Rivière by Liu Yongfu.²⁹⁹ Nevertheless, it remains unclear if Wu was making pictures of the war before *DSZHB* called him to service, as there appear to be no prints with the appropriate dates and his name to substantiate this.³⁰⁰ However, it is clear that the association with the *DSZHB* afforded its illustrators opportunities to tap into different sources of visuality ranging from eyewitness accounts and visits to the front or the ‘modern’ arsenals that the Qing government were building, to charts, maps and photographs. Wu himself was sent to examine war preparations at Wusong and to the Jiangnan Arsenal when Zeng Guoquan met the French Minister Jules Patenôtre in August 1884.³⁰¹ An illustration depicting the battle formation off the Taiwan coast in early 1885 was based on a map that Wu had obtained from an officer in Taiwan.³⁰² The inaugural issue of the *DSZHB* released in May 1884 opened with ‘Forceful Attack at Bac Ninh’ by Wu (**Fig. 2.20**).³⁰³ Following Ernest Major’s preface, its prominent positioning no doubt helped to raise the profile of the artist.

²⁹⁶ Viewed 24 August 2011.

²⁹⁷ Zhang, 1999, p. 131.

²⁹⁸ In the Shanghai History Museum, Wagner, p. 129.

²⁹⁹ Ye Xiaoqing, *The Dianshizhai Pictorial: Shanghai Urban Life, 1884-1898*, Ann Arbor: Center for Chinese Studies, The University of Michigan, 2003, p. 5.

³⁰⁰ The only prints that relate to the capture of Rivière in the BN album are part of a set of serial pictures (usually sets of 4), unsigned (see Fig. 4.9 in the discussion on the seriality of images).

³⁰¹ *DSZHB*, *Jia* 9 and 10.

³⁰² *DSZHB*, *Ding* 3, p. 18.

³⁰³ *DSZHB*, *Jia* 1, p. 3.

By the end of the year, Wu had evidently come up in the world: when the *Shenjiang Shengjing tu* 申江勝景圖 was released in November, Huang Fengjia 黃逢甲 writing in the preface, referred to him as a master (*huashi* 畫師). However, Wu was not exclusively committed to the *DSZHB*, he seems to have gone into business for himself and may also have created sheet prints in collaboration with other publishers like Wenyizhai 文儀齋, who were prolific producers of prints during the war. A comparison of his work in these separate areas shows how a professional illustrator mediated the demands of a commissioner as well as that of his public.

Unlike the prints that probably predate the *DSZHB* discussed in the previous section, 'Forceful Attack at Bac Ninh' interestingly shows the French army aggressively attacking the walled city, without a single Chinese soldier in sight – hardly a perspective that would have appeared in a victory picture. In fact, the visual viewpoint has more in common with the depictions of the war in Western pictorials as can be seen in 'Prise de Son Tay', which appeared in *L'Illustration* on 25 February 1884 (**Fig. 2.21**). It is not a miscellany of motifs but a carefully framed and focused picture designed to create an impact with some consideration given to scale and distance. However, it is left to the text to bring the picture in line with narratives that were well known to its Chinese audience. It reads:

'In the battle for Bac Ninh, both the French and the Chinese scored victories. While it cannot be determined that the Chinese have successfully retaken the town, some of the military tactics can be depicted here.

The French were advancing from three directions. Since they were afraid of ambush by the enemy in the hills or narrow valleys, they formed a broad front in order to encircle the town. After the ranks closed, they stormed the city. Soon the sky was covered with smoke and cannons thundered all around. The earth trembled and the waters flowed.

But the Chinese army had already withdrawn to a strategic position the day before. The fox is sceptical and careful but the hare is even smarter. As is the case in chess, one seeks to forestall the opponent.'³⁰⁴

Here describing Liu Yongfu's 'Ruse of an Empty City' as reported in *Shenbao* and already depicted in the victory pictures (**see Fig 2.17a**). Although the seal of Wu Youru follows the commentary, it can be seen from the original drawings of the

³⁰⁴ *DSZHB, jia* 1, p. 3

DSZHB that the inscriptions were not provided by the illustrators.³⁰⁵ Unlike the drawings for later issues, the title and inscription for 'Forceful Attack' have been pasted on in the exact same position that they were found in the pictorial suggesting that it must have also served as a dummy for the inaugural issue.³⁰⁶ It is therefore tantalizing to speculate upon the models or visual specs that Major may have given to Wu for the opening pages of his ambitious project. As the war progressed, it was to present new pictorial challenges and Wu was to gain a name for his naval illustrations (**see Chapter Three**).

Wu is clearly tied to the production of sheet prints by 1885 as a series of advertisements began to appear in issues of the *Shenbao* entitled 'Notice of Wu Youru' (*Wu Youru qi* 吳友如啟) promoting pictures (*tu* 圖) by him. Throughout the summer of 1885, he sold *tu* on a variety of subjects which included episodes taken from popular literature like the *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*, and scenes from Peking and Kun opera in sets of four and two (*jingxi situ*, *kunxi liangtu* 京戲四圖, 崑戲兩圖). More significantly, he was selling a series on the Sino-French War. For example, one of Wu's advertisements that first appeared in May reads: 'Eight scenes, eight pictures. Four pictures of victory in Vietnam, each *yang* two cents; victory pictures of Chinese troops, each *yang* three cents.'³⁰⁷

Two Nations Make Peace (*Liangguo yihe* 兩國議和) is quite possibly one of the works that Wu mentions in his advertisements (Fig. 2.22a). This is an as yet unpublished coloured version from the Muban Educational Trust, London. Apart from Wu Youru's name, there is no mention of a publisher on the print. This differs from two other uncoloured versions of this same illustration brought out by the Taohuawu printmakers Wu Taiyuan 吳太元 and Chen Tongsheng 陳同盛 under a more sensational title *The French Sue for Peace* (*Faren qiuhe* 法人求和)

³⁰⁵ Ye Xiaoping takes the view that the commentaries were probably written by literati associated with the *Shenbao* (Ye, 2003, pp. 36-37, n. 66).

³⁰⁶ I examined the *DSZHB* drawings relating to the Sino-French War and Wu Youru's series on meritorious officers in August 2011. My thanks to Ling Lizhong (Shanghai Museum) and Qin Zhenpin (Shanghai History Museum) for arranging access to these materials. These draughts, done in black-ink outline, are rendered on specially sized paper measuring approximately 55 cm (2-page span) x 46 cm and are 2.5 times larger than the lithograph form. Illustrators sometimes wrote their names but their personal seals were always affixed. Corrections were made with white paste – like Tippex – often inexpertly. Inscriptions and titles, when present were pasted on, suggesting the different hands involved in the process. While this is only a small sample of the more than 4,000 original drawings that survive, they focus on the artists discussed in this chapter and are indicative of the working patterns and level of involvement of the illustrators in the pictorial's production.

³⁰⁷ *Shenbao*, May 1885.

(Fig 2.22b).³⁰⁸ Apart from this, the captions and the inscriptions remain the same: they inform the viewer that the scene depicts an audience between a French delegation led by the French admiral Amédée Courbet and senior Qing officials Li Hongzhang 李鴻章 (1823-1901) and Zuo Zongtang 左宗棠 (1812-85). English and German emissaries accompany the French (likely British Minister Sir Harry Parkes, or James Duncan Campbell [1833-1907] and Gustav Detring [1842-1913], both Chinese customs officials who had been involved in the peace negotiations at various stages). Notwithstanding the differences in title, an analysis of the positioning of the parties within this illustration shows that Wu Youru had a shrewd understanding of what his viewers required and the psychological effects visual material could exert on their eye. The European party, made to appear small and insignificant, are depicted in positions of subservience and shunted to the extreme left corner. By contrast, the Chinese officials are portrayed on a larger than life scale and seated on raised seats like the emperor with the splendid screen behind. Even more provocative, is perhaps the fire-breathing dragon hovering over roiling waters and emanating puffs of smoke that echo the streams of cannon fire seen in victory pictures.

The depiction as an accurate rendition of a specific historic event is ambiguous. Several sessions of negotiations for the withdrawal of Chinese troops from Tonkin had been carried out, beginning with the Li-Fournier accord in May 1884, to the peace protocol signed in Paris on 4 April 1885, and concluding with a substantive peace treaty in Tianjin on 9 June between Li Hongzhang and the French Minister Jules Paternotre. The print makes no direct reference to specific events unlike the *DSZHB* coverage.³⁰⁹ Moreover, the assemblage of this cast of suspects was not likely: Parkes had already died of malaria in Beijing on 19 March; Campbell had signed the peace protocol on behalf of the Qing government in Paris; Courbet, seriously ill when the peace treaty was concluded, would die two days later on board his ship, the *Bayard*, which had been moored off the Taiwan coast,

³⁰⁸ For the Chen Tongsheng print, see Feng Jicai (ed.), *Zhongguo muban nianhua jicheng — Shanghai Xiaoxiaochang juan*, Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 2011, p. 368; for the Wu Taiyuan version, see Yu-chih Lai, 'Remapping Borders: Ren Bonian's Frontier Paintings and Urban Life in 1880s Shanghai', *The Art Bulletin*, vol. 86, no. 3 (September 2004), p. 559.

³⁰⁹ Wu also made the *DSZHB* illustrations for the signing of the Tianjin Accord ('Yueshi xingcheng' 越事行成), *Jia* 3, p. 19 and the peace treaty ('Heyi huaya' 和議畫押), *Ding* 7, p. 50.

and Zuo, already in failing health, did not leave his base in Fuzhou before his death in September.

Previous discussions of this Wu Youru illustration have been based on the uncoloured version entitled *The French Sue for Peace*.³¹⁰ In his 1961 classic text *History of the Chinese Woodblock Print (Zhongguo Banhua Shi 中國版畫史)*, Wang Bomin identified it as a lithograph from Taohuawu, likely based on the Chen Tongsheng mark, Wu's association with the *DSZHB* and also the 'Guwu' prefix to the artist's name. Given the ideological slant of his period and the title of the print he was looking at, Wang not surprisingly described it as a work 'imbued with patriotic thinking'.³¹¹ Wagner compares it against the context of the Shenbaoguan agenda and, despite its differing dimensions, has suggested that this was a drawing that Major had rejected as 'being incompatible with the realist agenda of the illustrations of his paper'.³¹² Having discovered this coloured version and examined some of Wu's original drawings from the *DSZHB*, as well as other sheet prints related to the Sino-French War, I would like to offer an alternative reading of the illustration and its related prints.

Several coincidences point to Wu as the publisher of the coloured version, and indicate that he was a savvy businessman aware of the different needs of those who commissioned illustrations and those who bought the sheet prints. The use of the term *yihe* 議和 reflects sentiments that are similar to Wu's *DSZHB* illustration of the signing of the peace treaty entitled 'Heyi huaya 和議畫押'—implying a meeting of equals rather than an encounter between the victor and the vanquished. The choice of words may have been a commercial decision on Wu's part not only to fall in line with his most prestigious client the Shenbaoguan but also to support his own burgeoning enterprise. Timing seems to support this view: as the *DSZHB* illustration was placed in the *Ding* 7 issue that came out in mid-June 1885, Wu was probably working on the drawing when the first of his *Shenbao* advertisements for victory pictures appeared in May. Comparisons between the two versions underscore a pragmatic tendency. Although the sheet-print industry was rife with copies and imitations, the stylistic similarities in

³¹⁰ Wang, Shanghai, 1961, p. 105; Wagner, p. 153; Gong Chanxing, 'Wu Youru jianlun', *Meishu Yanjiu*, 1990:3, p. 31, Lai, 2004, p. 559.

³¹¹ Wang, 1961, p. 105.

³¹² Wagner, pp. 153-54.

calligraphy suggest that both the Shanghai and the Taohuawu versions are by the same hand. Only a change of the first three characters in the title would have been necessary to change the picture's point of reference. Given Wu Youru's early links with Suzhou, it would not have been surprising if he had continued to supply printmakers in Taohuawu with illustrations. The choice of colours — a shade off the regular red-blue-yellow-green of the majority of these prints — indicates that this was not a run-of-the-mill victory picture but a carefully executed production. The heightened visual impact given by the vibrant scarlet and purple hues would have appealed to the sophisticated *Shenbao* reader and more than made up for the loss of a sensational headline.

Returning to the composition, I would also argue for the picture's autonomy from text and factual record, and also from other 'modern' pictorial formats of the time because it has different conditions of viewing. As previously mentioned these prints would have been pasted on walls and were looked at or commented upon by its audience, an interactive verbal practise that was subjective and whose unrecorded content is now lost to us. Although the illustration appears to represent a single cohesive frame in the 'new' realist manner, I suggest that the visual schema merely serves as a tableau-setting for the individual characters, each with their own story to tell — a setting not unlike those used in sheet prints depicting characters from popular dramas of the time (see Figs 2.12 and 2.16). Close reading reveals that the scene comprises elements of some of the popular news, rumours and myths — a construction of 'Chinese whispers', if you will — that circulated through images and spoken word, and transformed through retelling, redrawing, reprinting and reinterpretation.

The war had been the first test for China's modernized navy. As will be discussed in Chapter 3, China's attempts to acquire Western technology and establish a shipbuilding industry had captured the public imagination. Li Hongzhang and Zuo Zhongtang in their respective commands of the fleets in north and south China were seen as spearheading these initiatives. There is no dispute about the identity of Detring; he was a close associate of Li Hongzhang's and had acted as a go-between in the negotiations between France and the Qing empire. While not adhering to the factual historical account, there is no mistake in the presence of Admiral Courbet as he is a constant presence in prints of the war –

many depicting him as captured or killed in battle (see **Figs 2.18 and 2.19**). The presence of the British minister (Yingguo Ba gongshi 英國巴公使) is intriguing: according to Wagner, the 'Ba' should refer to the 'French ambassador Paternôtre, but switched statehood here to show that all the Western powers are begging for peace'.³¹³ The figure has also been identified as the recently deceased Sir Harry Parkes (well known in China as Ba Xiali 巴夏禮).³¹⁴ Given the orientation of the victory pictures and the theatrical slant of these prints, Parkes would fit better within a continuous wider narrative of victorious war waged against the Western powers. Parkes had arrived in China in 1841 and had first been involved in diplomatic work in Zhoushan shortly after its occupation by the British at the conclusion of the First Opium War. As acting consul in Canton at the start of the Second Opium War, he had been in the party that captured Ye Mingchen, then Governor-general of Liangguang, and sent him off as a prisoner of war to Calcutta, the event commemorated in the children's game *Prise de Canton*. In September 1860, Parkes achieved some notoriety during the Beijing campaign when he was one of the British subjects captured by the Chinese army, placed in prison and tortured, actions which prompted the subsequent burning of the Yuanmingyuan.³¹⁵ As Ambassador in Japan, Parkes had continued to remain a larger than life presence in East Asia, depicted from time to time in various pictorials. He was a much vilified figure in the areas touched by the wars; a Harry Parkes chamber pot had even been produced at the Shiwan kilns designed Chen Weiyan (陳渭岩) (**Fig. 2.23**).³¹⁶ Courbet and Parkes together would have made the ideal pairing of the archetypal aggressor-enemy brought into submission. Assuming that this print was finished at the time the final peace treaty was signed, the recent deaths of the two men would have been relatively fresh on the minds and associations between the two and the wars they fought were probably a common talking point for communities in China.

In contrast to the singular focus of the two works by Wu Youru discussed earlier, *Liu's Troops Defeat the French Navy* (*Liujun dapo Faguo shuishi tu* 劉軍大破法

³¹³ Ibid., p. 153

³¹⁴ Lai, 2004, p. 557.

³¹⁵ Stanley Lane-Poole, *Sir Harry Parkes in China*, Methuen & Co., London, 1901, pp. 140-75, 206-51.

³¹⁶ In the collection of the Guangdong Shiwan Ceramics Museum (<http://www.swcm.org.cn/>, accessed 7 March 2012).

國水師全圖), a sheet print with Wu's name and a facsimile of his seal, brought out by Wenyizhai, has all the significant characteristics that identify it as a victory picture: the French are shown defeated simultaneously on land and on sea, and French soldiers are shown captured and brought to submission before a Chinese official (**Fig. 2.24**). However, unlike the imperial pictures, the inscription is not in the distinctive hand of an emperor but in nondescript characters that would have been understood by the majority of the population, baldly stating the title and the date (Spring 1884, third/fifth [?] month). Nevertheless, the compositional elements can essentially be described as a distillation of notable illustrations in Wu's *Dianzhizhai* repertoire: naval and siege scenes (see **Figs 2.20 and Chapter 3**). The rubric assists in the enforcement of the narrative of victory. Some of the captions also allude to the modernities that were the subject of fascination then, for example, the Chinese use of submarine mines and the sinking of a French cast-iron ship. Although it is said to be a product of Vietnam Telegraph Agency (Yuenan Dianbaoguan yin 越南電報館印), it cannot be a depiction of an actual news event from the front because of the lack of specific details like the geographical location and troop movements. Moreover, the use of a generic-type name for the news agency lends a more cynical reading to this work. Did Wu Youru make the illustration for this print? That's hard to say as the facsimile of another seal found along the margins at the bottom left corner looks like that of Tian Zilin, another illustrator from the *DSZHB* stable. Regardless whether Wu was the author of the print, the inclusion of his name in this print evidently gave the work added value.

Tian Zilin (田子琳) is another artist who is strongly identified with Taohuawu and *nianhua* production in Suzhou and Shanghai.³¹⁷ There appears to be no biographical information on him but these connections to place can be made from extant works. Like Wu, Tian also used the prefix 'Guwu' in some of his works but a more direct link as a member of the Taohuawu Public Hall (*gongsuo* 公所) can be made from a series of pictures he contributed to the *gongsuo*'s charitable project to raise funds for victims of the 1877/78 so-called 'Incredible Famine'.³¹⁸ Of the six sets of famine pictures (*tieleitu* 鐵淚圖) that made up the project, Tian's is the only

³¹⁷ Shanghai Tushuguan, xia juan, no. 97.

³¹⁸ 'Si sheng gao zai tu qi' (四省告災圖啟), *Qi yu jin zhi zhenjuan zhengxin lu* 齊豫晉直賑捐徵信錄 (12 vols), Suzhou: Taohuawu Gongsuo, 1878.

set that has an artist's name to it (**Fig. 2.25**). Distributed separately as the *Henan Qihuang Tieleitu* (*Pictures Illustrating the Terrible Famine in Honan that Might Draw Tears from Iron*)³¹⁹, it attracted the attention of the Western missionary community. The pioneering sinologist, James Legge (1815-97) translated Tian's *tieleitu* into English so that it could be reproduced and sold in Britain to raise money for the famine relief fund. To encourage sales they were featured in *China's Millions*, an evangelical magazine published and also in *The Graphic*.³²⁰ Thus even though many saw these pictures little was known of their creator. Tian was also involved with the *DSZHB* from an early stage.

Like Wu, he also produced illustrations for other publishers during the Sino-French war. His *Victory at Langson* (Liangshan Dajie tu 諒山大捷圖) is a spectacular example of a victory picture: measuring 48 by 70 centimetres, it is on a scale larger than the average single-sheet popular print (**Fig. 2.26**). It is a lithograph bearing the marks of the publisher, 'Shanghai Jishan Ju yin' 上海積山局印, and the illustrator, 'Guwu [Suzhou] Tian Zilin', issued to commemorate the achievements of Feng Cuiting (Feng Zicai, 1818-1903) and Liu Zixi (Liu Mingchuan, 1836-96) during the Langson campaign in March 1885.³²¹ There is a hierarchy of representation: the two generals are shown at the head of their troops in a dominant position as if presiding over the battle that takes place in the middle ground. The print is topographical in nature utilizing cartographic conventions, with the location of Langson, its surrounding fields (*tian* 田), strategic routes at the hill-pass Zhen'nanguan and the Chinese camps clearly marked out. In fact, they resemble the panoramic situation maps which officials often presented to court to accompany their written dispatches (**Fig. 2.27**). This situation map drawn by a Korean *jinshi*, Piao Ding, which was presented to the court in 1884, reporting on the activities of Liu Yongfu's Black Flag Army at Bac Ninh also bears a resemblance to the popular prints discussed in this study. Perhaps Tian may have derived inspiration for this print from 'Border Negotiations' made for the *Dianshizhai* showing how artists may have performed cartographic duties during the Sino-French conflict (**Fig. 2.28**).³²²

³¹⁹ As translated by James Legge in 1878.

³²⁰ James Legge, *Pictures Illustrating the Terrible Famine in Honan that might Draw Tears from Iron*, 1878; James Hudson Taylor (ed.), *China's Millions*, London, 1878, pp. 113-23, 133, 156, 177.

³²¹ Aying, comp., 1957, p. 114.

³²² *DSZHB*, ji 5, p. 38

Unlike the direct visual impact of Wu Youru's prints, the text-image balance in Tian Zilin's print was probably targeted at a more sophisticated audience, not unlike the readership of *DSZHB*. This is an observation borne out by the fact that Tian's print was produced by Jishan Ju, a well-known publisher that, according to notices in *Shenbao*, specialized in lithographic editions of the classics and calligraphic facsimiles.³²³ It is accompanied by fourteen celebratory poems written in classical Chinese rather than the vernacular of other popular prints. The dense language written all over the print and its wealth of visual detail meant that the print did not have the instant impact of the more compact popular prints. Its complex blend of word and image suggests an inspiration more in common with the imperial *zhangong tu*.

Although they were probably not conscious of it, the pattern of Wu and Tian's artistic practices put them within a global phenomenon that had developed as a result of new pictorial media formats and industrialized print technology. In 1863, when the French poet and art critic Charles Baudelaire (1821-67) wrote his essay 'The Painter of Modern Life', he argued that the artists who captured his 'contemporary social scene' were no less relevant than painters of historical and classical themes like Raphael, Titian and members of the French Academy.³²⁴ Artists like Baudelaire's protagonist Constantin Guys (1802-92) faced the challenge of putting into permanent form 'the fleeting moment and all that it suggests of the eternal'.³²⁵ Like Guys, Wu and his *DSZHB* colleagues increasingly began to document social manners and current events, moving away from the traditional Chinese illustrative repertoire of their early work. As visuality expanded within the global print culture, pictures were replacing texts; increasingly the agenda of illustrators was being compared with that of writers rather than painters.³²⁶

3. Modernity and the Pictorial Turn

The victory pictures and other print material discussed in the preceding subsections display the wide range of visual vocabulary that illustrators and print producers employed in conveying this war to their varied audiences. They range

³²³ The notice appeared in *Shenbao* several times in May 1887. This perhaps suggests that in some cases popular prints were a by-product of the book trade.

³²⁴ Baudelaire, Charles. *The Painter of Modern Life*, translated by P.E. Charvet, London: Penguin Books — Great Ideas, 2010, pp. 1-5.

³²⁵ Baudelaire, p. 6

³²⁶ Baudelaire compares Guys with Balzac.

from stock representations belonging to the traditional repertoire of motifs and conventions associated with Chinese woodblock illustrations to the complex and detailed 'realist' scenes that were identified with the new print technology, lithography, and its products like the *DSZHB* (compare, for example, **Figs 2.18, 2.20 and 2.22**). Stark differences at the opposing ends in this spectrum of visuality can be seen from the work of Tian Zilin, beginning with the *tieleitu* of the late 1870s to his work for the opening issues of the *DSZHB* and his monumental lithograph print of 1885 (**see Figs 2.25, 2.26 and 2.28**).

Why then was there this change during the late 19th century, when pictorial representation appeared to move away from conventionalized and codified idioms that have been used at least since the Ming period? Locating such a shift in contemporary discourse, the theorist W.J.T. Mitchell describes this type of phenomenon as a 'pictorial turn', which he attributes to Michel Foucault's 'insistence on a history and theory of power/knowledge that exposes the rift between the discursive and the "visible," the seeable and the sayable, as the crucial fault-line in "scopic regimes" of modernity'.³²⁷ For the purposes of this discussion, the fault lines can perhaps be drawn between the sheet-print (and hence by extension, the victory picture) and woodblock printing as traditional forms, and the illustrated periodical (*huabao* 畫報) as signifiers of modernity. It will also focus solely on the visual.

Laikwan Pang suggests that the pictorial turn is located where the visual rather than the textual becomes a key medium of communication for the literates, when 'pictures were no longer perceived as embellishing the written words but were themselves direct carriers of messages and information'.³²⁸ Using close readings of illustrations from various lithograph *huabao* of the late Qing, including the *DSZHB*, Pang argues that this turn was manifested as a type of 'new' realism. Situated within the intellectual and political discourse of progressive reform associated with figures like Kang Youwei and Cai Yuanpei, pictures in this realist style oscillated between the need to convey and explain the forms and

³²⁷ W.J.T. Mitchell. 'The Pictorial Turn', *Picture Theory: Essays on Verbal and Visual Representation*, Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1995, p. 12; Martin Jay, "Scopic Regimes of Modernity", in *Vision and Visuality*, edited by Hal Foster, Bay Press, Seattle, 1988, pp. 3-27.

³²⁸ Pang, Laikwan. "The pictorial turn: realism, modernity and China's print culture in the late nineteenth century." *Visual Studies* 20.1 (2005), p. 18.

patterns of the new world and to be in themselves emblematic of China's modernity.³²⁹

As for lithography, its heyday in China proved to be short; it thrived in the 1880s and the 1890s and was rapidly supplanted by the letterpress in the 1900s. Nevertheless, according to Christopher A. Reed, the western technology brought with it mechanization, industrialization and a form of print capitalism that revolutionized the book market and 'destroyed late Qing China's artisanal print production mechanism'.³³⁰ While the latter observation may have been true of the book publishing, however, as demonstrated by the prints discussed in this chapter, it proved otherwise in the case of popular print production.

Pang and Reed seem to imply that modernity was a clear-cut break with the past but I suggest that comparative readings of the Sino-French victory pictures in both woodblock and lithography would give a more nuanced view of this brave new world. I argue that modernity was an ongoing experience of negotiation and mediation not only for the intellectuals/literati elite but also for all levels of the population in China. For example, the changing visual styles in the work of an artist like Tian Zilin cannot be read as a linear development of his oeuvre over time, from the simplistic to the complicated, from the diagrammatic to the fully representational, and from the flatness of a two-dimensional surface to the perspectival three-dimensional picture. Rather illustrators responded to the materials and media before them and adjusted their working styles to suit their patrons.

On a most superficial level, how did lithography and photolithography affect the production and appearance of sheet-prints? In these techniques, the picture or text was applied to smooth stone instead of carving or etching on wood or metal on the principle that water and grease would repel each other.³³¹ As art historians in the West noted, it made the process of printing speedier: cutting out the middleman role of the carver/engraver. The attraction lay in their ability to

³²⁹ Ibid., pp. 21-23.

³³⁰ Christopher A. Reed. *Gutenberg in Shanghai: Chinese print capitalism, 1876-1937*, Vancouver, B.C. and London: University of British Columbia Press and Eurospan, 2004, pp. 90-91, 122-25.

³³¹ Reed, p. 61; Walter Benjamin, *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, translated by J. A. Underwood, London: Penguin Books — Great Ideas, 2008 (first published 1936), p. 4

reproduce painterly brushwork and minute pictorial detail.³³² Christopher Reed argues that in the context of China, publishers chose lithography over other forms of mechanized print technology in the late 19th century over other imported forms of mechanized print technology because it appealed to the Chinese ‘visual sensibility’.³³³ The sense of wonder is palpable when Huang Shiquan 黃式權 wrote in 1883 about the lithographed books in *Records of the Illusive Dream of Shanghai* (*Songnan mengying lu* 淞南夢影錄): ‘[They] use stone plates from the West, rubbed smooth like a mirror. Using an “electric lens” (*dianjing* 電鏡), they project images of the characters onto the stone, and then they lay on mucilage and print using an oily ink ... [all of them] printed fine like an ox’s hair and sharp as a rhinoceros horn.’³³⁴ An article in the *North China Herald* dated 23 May 1889 noted ‘that the beauty of good writing is better preserved on stone than carved wood’, and even Wu Youru is said to have expressed wonder at how printing was carried out in an instant ‘with a supernatural workmanship that is completely effortless’.³³⁵

The immediate impact of the differences between lithography and the woodblock print can clearly be seen by comparing two prints: *The Great Victory at Bac Ninh* (*Beining Dajie* 北甯大捷) and *Complete Victory Picture at Bac Ninh and Thai Nguyen* (*Beining Taiyuan quanshengtu* 北甯太原全勝圖) (**Figs. 2.29 and 2.30**). The former is an undated and uncoloured lithograph. Bordered by a fancy floral scroll, the pictorial space is cluttered with baroque detail, almost as if the illustrator and/or the lithographer were experimenting with the range of effects that was achievable by the new technology. The French troops, the Black Flags and the Qing armies are barely discernable, well camouflaged amidst an extravagant landscape of craggy rock faces, precipitous hanging cliffs, twisted pines and luxuriant vegetation. Nevertheless, the figures are more fully fleshed out when compared with the stick-like figures in some of the woodblock prints. When the print is stripped of its ornament, revealing only constituent forms, its composition is startlingly similar to the woodblock print in Figure 2.30. Its essential elements are not very different from those found on woodblock

³³² William M. Ivins, Jr., *Prints and Visual Communication*, Cambridge, Mass. and London: The MIT Press, 1996 (first published 1953), pp. 108-12.

³³³ Reed, p. 27.

³³⁴ Huang Shiquan, *Songnan mengying lu*, 1883. Here Reed’s translation, pp. 83-84.

³³⁵ *North China Herald*, 25 May 1889:633; Reed, p. 109.

versions of the victory picture, especially in its use of the snaking-line format to convey the impression of distance and magnitude. Much of the space shows the French and Algerian troops, and Liu Yongfu and his Black Flags marching out toward each other. However, the eventual encounter of the adversaries has been shunted to the bottom right corner — not the climax of the story but one of many episodes of competing interest as explained by the captions.

Although *The Great Victory at Bac Ninh* utilises the ‘new’ realism and a modern print medium, the inscription reinforces the traditional way of understanding warfare through historical precedent. Like the *DSZHB*’s ‘Forceful Attack at Bac Ninh’ (Fig. 2.20), which explained the events through the ‘ruse of an empty city’, this inscription uses the traditional saying that ‘an army of righteousness is unconquerable’ (*shi zhi wei zhuang* 師直為壯) to justify the retreat of Liu Yongfu from Bac Ninh and the intervention of the Qing state in the affairs of Annam. The saying is derived from the *Chunqiu Zuozhuan* (春秋左傳), a historical commentary from the Spring and Autumn period, and attributed to Hu Yan (狐偃), a soldier and a statesman in the state of Jin, in justifying the retreat of Duke Wen of Jin against the state of Chu during the Battle of Chengpu (城濮之戰) in 632 BCE.³³⁶ For the literate audience, well-versed in the classics, the analogy between the Warring States and the present situation between the Qing state, its satellite Annam and France, as was the paradigm of Liu and Cen Yuying as upright generals, would have been clear.

The captions are perhaps more intriguing: not all are purposefully etched on a cliff-face like those on the traditional woodblocks (see Fig. 2.11a), but they are nevertheless informative. In addition to introducing the dramatis personae, they explained events and objects that were not visible to the eye, and pointed out details in the picture that would have been new and timely. The caption set in the calm waters described how submarine mines (*shuilei* 水雷) were used to sink the iron-clad ships, hence the eloquent silence of the empty bay (top left). Another caption set before a burning turret describes it as a result of the use of

³³⁶ Book V ‘Duke Xi’, 28th year, para 5, *Chunqiu zuozhuan* (James Legge, trans., 1872; Andrew Miller, transliteration, 2007, electronic edition, accessed 17 July 2012). <http://www2.iath.virginia.edu/saxon/servlet/SaxonServlet?source=xwomen/texts/chunqiu.xml&style=xwomen/xsl/dynaxml.xsl&chunk.id=tpage&doc.view=tooc&doc.lang=bilingual>

landmines (*dilei* 地雷). A hot air balloon hovers over the camp of Cen Yuying 岑毓英 (1829-89), the Viceroy of Yunnan and Guizhou.

Woodblock print producers responded to the challenges of lithography and the public fascination with modernity in a creative manner. For example, from close comparison, a woodblock print entitled *Complete Victory Picture at Bac Ninh and Thai Nguyen* (*Beining Taiyuan quanshengtu* 北甯太原全勝圖) appears to have been adapted from the lithograph (**Fig. 2.30**). Constrained by the limitations of medium, the lithograph could not be fully reproduced in woodblock. Instead, the illustrator/designer/carver selectively chose elements from the lithograph adapting the realistic depictions to the diagrammatic vernacular associated with traditional Chinese illustration. Like the lithograph, this victory picture is also surrounded by a fancy border; however, rather than the sinuous scroll, there is the cracked-ice pattern — a common feature in architectural decoration, its angularity more easily and rapidly achieved by the carver's knife. Despite its similar format, as indicated by the inscriptions, a story different from that in the lithography is attached to the woodblock print.

The meagre, wire-stiff strokes of the title and the inscription are rendered with economy, almost as if they had been scratched on to the woodblock in haste. It stands in stark contrast to the rich inkiness of the calligraphy on the lithograph. The inscription dated to mid-Spring 1884, and attributed to Crouching Phoenix from Chiyang-Qiupu³³⁷, a scenic spot in Anhui province known from a poem by Li Bai, is a literati conceit and the incident described is fictitious. According to the inscription, the French forces were annihilated after falling prey to the trap laid by the Tiger and Dragon, a reference to the epithet 'Many Dragons, Superior Tigers 多龍超虎' for the Qing general Bao Chao (鮑超, 1828-86). The central focus of the print shows Bao's troops, headed by a shooting general on horseback attacking the French troops led by General François de Négrier. During the Taiping and Nian Rebellions, Bao had headed an important battalion in the Hunan Army named Ting 霆營 after his *zi* Chunting 春霆. In 1866, due to conflicts with another officer Liu Mingchuan (劉銘傳, 1836-96), Bao retired to his home province of Sichuan on the pretext of ill health. In 1880, he was called back to service in Hunan as conflict arose between Russia and China in the Ili River

³³⁷ 甲申仲春月上澣，池陽秋浦氏臥鳳

region (present-day Kazakhstan). As Liu Yongfu requested assistance from the Qing army after his retreat from Bac Ninh, there was talk that Bao's battalion would be sent to assist him.³³⁸ In truth, this did not happen. In the aftermath of the devastating destruction of the modern shipyard in Fuzhou, regional commanders balked at the contributions they were asked to make to the war efforts. In a well-known incident, the Governor of Sichuan, Ding Baozhen 丁寶楨, refused to raise 100,000 *liang* of silver for Bao saying: 'The pockets of Bao Chao's troops are deep, it would be difficult to fill them.'³³⁹ Bao Chao and his battalion were eventually sent in the Spring of 1885 to the Yunnan border in a secondary role guarding the White Horse pass.³⁴⁰

Both the lithograph and the woodblock print are full of detail to pique the viewer's interest. In the lithograph, detail has been used to render a cohesive composition and provide a realistic representation. In the woodblock, the details have a different intention: they are meant to inform. The primary elements of the lithograph's composition are echoed on the woodblock print: The French troops come into contact with the Chinese braves watched by Cen Yuying (left) and Liu Yongfu (right) in their separate encampments. However, instead of filling all the available pictorial space with landscape detail, the woodblock print looks more like an assemblage of scenes, each with their own dramatic story to tell. Here, the flaming turret built on the cliffs looks more like a pagoda set in a hillock. More surprising is the visual realization to the Western weaponry and inventions alluded to by captions in the lithograph. Hidden within a cave, barely discernable, a soldier uses the telescope (lit. thousand-*li* lenses 千里鏡) to observe events in Hanoi (detail 1). The submarine mine has been shaped like a giant fish displayed on a ornamental stand – a stance playfully emulated by two soldiers, one holding the other aloft – is ready to fire at the Western armoured ships in the bay (detail 2). There is not one but two balloons which float towards Thai Nguyen; below an archer stands on a watch-tower with his bow drawn and, according to the inscription, a single arrow would deflate the balloon and bring it down (detail 3).

³³⁸ 鮑超, <http://baike.baidu.com/view/386626.htm> (accessed 22 July 2012)

³³⁹ '鮑超軍需甚重，措辦為難'，清德宗實錄卷192 十年八月，*Qing Dezong shilu, juan* 192, 8th month of the 10th year.

³⁴⁰ 鮑超, <http://baike.baidu.com/view/386626.htm> (accessed 22 July 2012); Hummel, pp. 609-10.

Although never actually used in the Sino-French war, the hot-air balloon becomes a persistent motif, reflecting a certain fascination with ships, carriages, trains, flying machines and submarines during the late Qing period and its associations with modernity. Captions on numerous victory pictures inform us that the hot-air balloon was purportedly used for conducting reconnaissance exercises and as a platform where archers could launch their flaming arrows. Although the scenes were situated in a foreign country, albeit a vassal state, these captions served to locate the event in the context of current events in China. In spite of being somewhat more imaginative than factual, these captions mirror flashpoints of public interest. The Self Strengthening Movement (c. 1861-95) that commenced at the conclusion of the Second Opium War had concentrated first on defence and munitions, building the Jiangnan Arsenal and the Fuzhou Naval Dockyard, and newspapers regularly reported on their progress.³⁴¹

The references to the balloons and the submarine mines coincide with two consecutive features in the inaugural issue of the *DSZHB* and as such are likely to have provided some direction for the printmakers.³⁴² Based on the date in the woodblock print and the *DSZHB* features, the lithograph can perhaps be dated close to early April 1884, when the first number of the *Jia* volume was issued, or shortly thereafter. 'New-style Hot-air Balloon' (*Xinyang qiqiu* 新樣氣球) describes the use of balloons for intelligence purposes by the French during the Franco-Prussian war (1870-71) (**Fig. 2.31**). 'Testing the submarine mines' (*Yan fang shuilei* 演放水雷) depicts the weapon being demonstrated before an audience of imperial officials at the Jiangnan Arsenal (**Fig. 2.32**). The device is not depicted but its power is shown through the movement of water; the leaping streams of water not unlike the flames that engulf the turret in the lithograph.

On 18 April 1884, just before the launch of the *DSZHB*, an illustrated newspaper, *Shubao* (述報), was brought out in Canton.³⁴³ Promoting the diffusion of Western knowledge in China, *Shubao* promised a Western picture daily, reproduced through photolithography. The paper was short-lived, ceasing

³⁴¹ Rowe, pp. 214-15.

³⁴² *DSZHB*, *Jia* 1, 'Xinyang qiqiu 新樣氣球' and 'Yan fang shuilei 演放水雷', pp. 6 and 7

³⁴³ It came out as a daily with a break in production after every nine days; each month the papers could be compiled to form a volume in a larger series entitled 'Compendium of Current Events in China and the West' (中西近事匯編). *Shubao*, 18 April 1884, pp. 1-6, facsimile issued as *Zhongguo shi xue cong shu zhi* 20, edited by Wu Xiangxiang, Taipei: Taiwan Xuesheng Shuju, Minguo 54 [1965].

production on 3 April 1885, and the run of 'Western' pictures discontinued after the first few issues³⁴⁴, nevertheless its focus on the Sino-French war is illuminating on how a mixture of fact, fiction, rumour and superstition was transmitted as current events or knowledge. The second issue of *Shubao* (19 April 1884) featured illustrations of two hot-air balloon models to accompany a story on how the French had brought nine balloons into Annamese territory for military surveillance.³⁴⁵ In the discourse on Chinese modernity by cultural and literary historians, the hot-air balloon was tied closely to the idea of 'seeing'. For Laikwan Pang, the balloon in *Shubao* was the embodiment of 'the complicated gaze of the Chinese, wanting to see how the French saw them'.³⁴⁶ Others like David Der-wei Wang have argued that it is connected to the idea of flight and the balloon signifies broadened vision in China as riders in a balloon are able to see the world in a way that other people cannot.³⁴⁷

Given the context of the victory pictures and the mindset of the public in 1884, I would argue that the hot-air balloon had more direct and immediate associations. As suggested by the various examples discussed in this chapter, modernity or current events appear best explained through traditional concepts and historical analogy. It is thus not surprising that the hot-air balloon would have had such receptability since it resembles the traditional sky lantern (*kongming deng* 孔明燈), which had been named for the military strategist Zhuge Liang 諸葛亮 (181-234). Since the Three Kingdoms period (220-80), these unmanned 'balloons' had been occasionally used in China for military signalling.³⁴⁸ Perhaps more significantly, it was a French invention that had come to be associated with the military over the course of the 19th century.³⁴⁹ The use of a balloon, *l'Entreprenant*, as an observation post by the army of the First French Republic during the Battle of Fleurus in 1794, is commemorated in a 1837 painting by Jean Baptiste Mauzaisse at the Gallery of Battles (Galerie des

³⁴⁴ Some later issues featured reproductions from the *Dianshizhai* including a portrait of Admiral Courbet, *ibid.*, p. 114.

³⁴⁵ *Shubao*, 19 April 1884, pp. 7-9.

³⁴⁶ Pang, 2005, p. 29.

³⁴⁷ David Der-wei Wang. *Fin-de-siècle Splendor: Repressed Modernities of Late Qing Fiction, 1849-1911*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997, pp. 190-91.

³⁴⁸ Deng, Yinke (Wang Pingxing, trans.). *Ancient Chinese Inventions*. Beijing: China Intercontinental Press, 2005.

³⁴⁹ An invention of the Montgolfiér brothers; the first manned flights had taken place in 1783.

Batailles) in Versailles.³⁵⁰ As referenced in the *DSZHB*, the French military's spectacular use of balloons had come to the attention of world's press in 1870-71 in the Franco-Prussian War. During the Siege of Paris, 66 balloons were launched from the city carrying people, equipment and more than two million pieces of mail. The war contributions of aeronauts eventually led to a French balloon corps being set up in 1874.³⁵¹ In 1884, as China became increasingly involved in Annam's fight against colonization by France, balloons were used for bombing when the French captured Dien Bien Phu near the Laotian border.³⁵² Ultimately, the balloon ultimately remains one of many signifiers of modernity but its continued presence signalled a development towards a more descriptive visual regime that is discussed in Chapter Three. True change to the visual schema was brought to the victory picture when the actual conduct of war changed and audiences began to think about differently about war.

³⁵⁰ See en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Bataille_de_Fleurus_1794.JP (accessed 20 July 2012).

³⁵¹ U.S. Centennial of Flight Commission, 'Military Use of Balloons in the Mid- and Late Nineteenth Century', <http://www.centennialofflight.gov> (accessed 19 July 2012)

³⁵² 'The World at War — French Aviation: Before the Great War, 1783-1914', <http://www.schudak.de/timelines> (accessed 19 July 2012).

CHAPTER THREE

THE MARITIME CHALLENGE: TOWARDS A NEW ICONOGRAPHY OF WAR

The Battle of Mawei (*Majiang jiebao* 馬江捷報) is one of the most intriguing battle depictions from the Sino-French War (**Fig. 3.1**). It is a naval scene that shows the French on the left and the Qing on the right, confronting each other in the classic line-of-battle formation. The ships are arranged in diagonal lines forming a 'V', suggesting a vanishing point near the shore where the chimneys of an arsenal can be glimpsed in the far distance. Heading the line and in the foreground are the *Triomphante* (*Deliyongfen* 德利用芬) and the *Yangwu* 揚武, who come from opposing ends of the pictorial frame. Instead of the melee of warfare on land, there is an almost majestic stillness in this print, with the ships bobbing on the waves and the soldiers crowded on deck more like spectators than participants in the act of war. Its perspectival rendering, pictorial components, visual schema and bilingual text—with the English subtitle 'Moo kiang news China with France To join in battle' in extravagant cursive script—stand in stark contrast to the victory pictures of the Sino-French War discussed in the previous chapter. What accounts for its unusual appearance? What are the contexts in which such a work was created? These are some of the questions that are addressed in this chapter.

The turning point of the war had come in the summer of 1884, when Admiral Courbet was ordered to bring his Far East Squadron towards the port city of Fuzhou and the location of a strategic Qing shipyard and arsenal. As the theatre of war shifted from Annam to China, and the focus of fighting also shifted from land to sea, the victory picture, both literally and metaphorically, underwent a sea change. The modernized Qing fleet faced its first engagement on 23 August at the Battle of Mawei (or Pagoda Anchorage³⁵³ as it was known to the Europeans) and was disastrously defeated, more of which later. Nevertheless, for a nation engaged in the highly visible activity of self-strengthening, it was an event that attracted tremendous public interest and engendered numerous depictions of naval battle (*shuizhantu* 水戰圖), an uncommon genre.

³⁵³ Named for the distinctive pagoda Loxingta 羅星塔 located on a hill above the harbour.

Here I suggest that the depiction of naval battles presented artists and illustrators with a visual challenge for reasons that were both historical and contemporary. They had no familiar formats, pictorial conventions and motifs to rely on. Until the mid-19th century, the Chinese understanding of the sea was the opposite of the global maritime regime. Maritime art did not largely exist as an entity for the Chinese as it did in the West. There was a notable absence of a naval tradition—the Qing government did not even maintain a unified standing navy, let alone one capable of action on the open ocean. Ultimately, it was a new way of conducting war: using armoured warships and heavy firepower instead of foot soldiers, horses and small arms. As such, this chapter begins first by exploring these aspects, then discussing the possible visual sources for artists in the context of international trade and the Qing empire's attempts to acquire science and technology, before returning to key naval events of the Sino-French War and some examples of these *shuizhan tu*.

I Early Maritime Concepts³⁵⁴ and the Absence of Maritime Art in China

1. Myth and Piracy: The Sea as a Barrier in Pre- and Early Modern China

As the cradle of Chinese civilization is primarily focused around an inland agrarian culture in the Central Plains (Zhongyuan 中原), the maritime has been marginalized from an early period, even though there is archaeological evidence of a coastal culture and there are accounts of navies and naval battles from histories like the *Commentary of Zuo* (*Zuozhuan* 左傳). Because of the vast mass that constituted continental China, rulers (right up to the Qing) tended to think in terms of consolidation rather than overseas expansion. Early texts like the *Shijing* 詩經 (*Book of Odes*) already contain references to the sea (*hai* 海) as a 'natural barrier' and the Four Seas (*Sihai* 四海), each named for a cardinal direction, as the boundaries of China, thus forming the spatial concepts of *hainei* 海內 (within the Four Seas) referring to that which was domestic and *haiwai* 海外 (beyond the seas) referring to that which was extraterritorial.³⁵⁵ This distinction between boundaries

³⁵⁴ Maritime concept is taken here to mean 'a people's understanding of the ocean and ocean-related physical, objective, and human activities, formed through social practice and theoretical thinking' (Sun, Lixin. 'Chinese Maritime Concepts'. *Asia Europe Journal* 8.3 [2010], p. 328).

³⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 329. See also Angela Schottenhammer, 'The Sea as a Barrier and Contact Zone: Maritime Space and Sea Routes in Traditional Chinese Books and Maps', in Schottenhammer and Roderich Ptak, eds., *The Perception of Maritime Space in Traditional Chinese Sources*, East Asian Economic and Socio-cultural Studies, East Asian Maritime History 2. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 2006, pp. 3-13.

and frontiers would inform a world-view that placed China at the civilized centre and the others as 'barbarians', and inform its diplomatic dealings with other nations. The tribute system was the centrepiece of the Chinese world order, and the giving of gifts and the ritual of a foreign prince or his envoy kowtowing in front of the Chinese emperor were part of a hierarchy that placed the emperor at the apex.³⁵⁶

The distinction between *haiwai* and *hainei* can clearly be seen in the structure of early geographical texts like the *Shanhai jing*.³⁵⁷ Notwithstanding the prosperous maritime silk route of the Tang, and a port like Quanzhou that rivalled Alexandria, the Chinese rarely conducted large-scale sea voyages, and *haiwai* was largely a product of the imagination as exemplified by the mythical lands and creatures described in the *Shanhai jing* (see Figure 2.8).³⁵⁸ The seven voyages undertaken by Admiral Zhenghe 鄭和 (1371-1433) between 1405 and 1433 proved to be an exception and later, in the 15th century, with the continuous raids along the China coast from the so-called 'Japanese pirates' (*wokou* 倭寇)³⁵⁹, the Ming empire adopted a closed-door policy that prohibited its subjects from launching out and focused on consolidating coastal defences.³⁶⁰

A visual and print culture developed around the campaign against the pirates. *Chouhai tubian* 籌海圖編 (*Illustrated Book on Maritime Defence*) by Zheng Ruoceng 鄭若曾 (1503-70) not only provided important information of the fortifications, the methods of defence and the routes used by the pirates, it also contained the earliest maps of China's coastline.³⁶¹ While not depicting actual scenes of conflict, the last of the *Chouhai tubian*'s thirteen *juan* also contains

³⁵⁶ Mentioned here as a generalization. While there is no doubt that a tributary system was still in place during the Qing dynasty, opinions vary as to its historical significance. Western scholars like James Hevia, John Wills Jr. and Laura Hostetler take the view that the earlier generation of scholars like John K. Fairbank and his followers have overestimated the impact the tributary system had in forming Qing policy towards foreigners. For a nuanced and comprehensive discussion of the scholarship, see Richard J. Smith, 'Mapping China and the Question of a China-Centered Tributary System', *The Asia-Pacific Journal*, vol. 11, no. 3, 28 January 2013 (http://www.japanfocus.org/-Richard_J.-Smith/3888, accessed 20 August 2013).

³⁵⁷ *Shanhai jing* (Chinese Text Project (<http://ctext.org/shan-hai-jing>, accessed 10 July 2013).

³⁵⁸ Sun, pp. 328-29.

³⁵⁹ In actual fact of mixed ethnicities, as noted by the *Ming shi* (Anthony Reid, 'Violence at Sea' in Robert J. Antony, ed., *Elusive Pirates, Pervasive Smugglers: Violence and Clandestine Trade in the South China Sea*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2010, p. 18).

³⁶⁰ Sun, pp. 328-30.

³⁶¹ Zheng Ruoceng (with preface by Hu Zhongxian 胡宗憲), *Chouhai tubian*, 1624 edition (digitized in the Harvard University Library, <http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:FHCL:4907093>, accessed 10 July 2013); see also <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Science/chouhaitubian.html>.

illustrations of ships that were used in the campaign and drawings of the arms and armour of the troops involved (**Figs 3.2a and 3.2b**). Texts and recorded inscriptions mention that success in these coastal campaigns was celebrated among officials and literati by both words and pictures.³⁶² One rare survival is *Defending the Borders of Three Provinces* (*Sansheng Beibian tu* 三省備邊圖), a woodblock-printed illustrated account of Su Yu's 蘇愚 military career patrolling the borders of Guizhou, Fujian and Guangdong during the Longqing 隆慶 and Wanli 萬曆 reigns (1567-72, 1572-1620). Its twenty-five illustrations include a depiction of a raid on *wokou* in Yongning and a flotilla of small barges taking orders from an official (**Fig. 3.3a and 3.3b**).³⁶³ *Wokou*, which translates, literally as 'dwarf bandit/pirate' became a subject for both serious anthropological study as well as the fictitious imagination.³⁶⁴ A stereotype of the *wokou* developed as can be seen from this detail of the *Wokou tujian* (倭寇圖卷), attributed to Qiu Ying but most likely a Suzhou *pian* 蘇州片, in the collection of the University of Tokyo (**Fig. 3.4a and 3.4b**).³⁶⁵ The depiction is comparable to the Yongning scene from Su Yu's account (**Fig. 3.3a**); *wokou* were invariably shown with heads shaved in the front, with the remaining scraped into a back-knot, wearing a loose blouson and little else. Their scanty dress stands in stark contrast to the heavy armour worn by the Guangdong forces (Fig. 3.2b). As will be discussed later, the persistence of this stereotyping continues to be seen in the popular victory pictures, some three to four centuries later.

What sense of the maritime do we get from these images of a campaign of coastal defence? In the *Todai* scroll, most of the fighting is shown on land or of Ming troops alighting their vessels in pursuit of the pirates. There is only one scene that suggests that fighting ever took place on water: a vignette from the scroll shows the adversaries in confrontation, spears locked and standing in their respective barges (**Fig. 3.4b**). The scene is incongruously located within a genteel,

³⁶² Ma, 2011, pp. 51-53.

³⁶³ *Ibid.*, pp. 85-86.

³⁶⁴ Wang Yong, 'Realistic and Fantastic Images of "Dwarf Pirates": The Evolution of Ming Dynasty Perceptions of the Japanese.' in Joshua A. Fogel, ed., *Sagacious Monks and Bloodthirsty Warriors: Chinese Views of Japan in the Ming-Qing Period*. Norwalk, CT: EastBridge, 2002, pp. 17-41.

³⁶⁵ For a reproduction, see Qiu Ying, *Wakō zukan* [art reproduction]. Tōkyō : Kondō shuppansha, 1974. Suzhou *pian* are a decorative type of figure painting usually rendered in a decorative blue-green mode that was popular during the mid-to late Ming period. For their characteristics and connection to the school of Qiu Ying, see Ellen Johnston Laing, "'Suzhou Pian" and Other Dubious Paintings in the Received "Oeuvre" of Qiu Ying', *Artibus Asiae*, vol. 59, no. 3/4 (2000), pp. 265-295.

almost bucolic landscape that is typical of a Suzhou *pian*, more like a river skirmish between rival gangs than a major military campaign to protect the coastal line of the empire. There is also a similar scroll *Resisting the Japanese* (*Kang wo tu* 抗倭圖) in the collection of the National Museum of China. Ma Ya-chen believes that Suzhou *pian* like these may have developed from the commemorative subject of 'Hu Zongxian Pacifying the Japanese' ('Hu Zongxian ping wo' 胡宗憲平倭).³⁶⁶ The twenty-five illustrations in *Sansheng Beibian tu* largely focused on Su Yu's other land campaigns and military activities. While the models of the ships in *Chouhai Tubian* are instructive as diagrams, almost like a train-spotter's guide, they are divorced from the actual context at sea. The massive, exposed paddles suggest that these vessels may have been unwieldy and slow, requiring a lot of manpower to operate and as such were regarded more as conveyors of troops than weapons of war; at best they provided a platform for launching weapons, in this case archers (see Fig. 3.2a). Overall, the view of the sea during the Ming period remains resolutely as that of a barrier, dividing the subjects of the empire from the others, in particular the *wokou*. In fighting a threat that came from the sea, rather than launching out to attack them, the military brought the fight on land. As such, these visual materials could not be classified as maritime.

These concepts persisted until the end of the Qianlong reign. With maritime threats at the beginning of the Qing period from Ming loyalists like Zheng Chenggong 鄭成功 (Coxinga, 1624-62), who had bases in coastal Fujian and Taiwan, the Qing strategic approach remained inward looking. Extreme measures in dealing with the malcontents included relocating coastal communities inland and burning all shipping within 30 miles of the coastline.³⁶⁷ Although Taiwan was subdued in 1683, it remained a thorn in the side of the Qing empire. The quelling of the 1787-88 rebellion led by Lin Shuangwen was considered one of Qianlong's ten great victories and pictures were commissioned both in lacquer and as copperplate prints (see Figs 1.14 a and b; 1.17 a-c and 2.1b). It is the only one of the 'legendary' campaigns that involved a sea crossing and of the dozen scenes that comprise the *Pacification of Taiwan* series, only three can be considered maritime scenes: 'The Battle of Kuzhai' (Fig. 1.14a); 'The Capture of Zhuang Datian' (Fig. 2.1b) and

³⁶⁶ Ma, 2011, p. 80

³⁶⁷ Sun, p. 330.

'Crossing the Ocean and Triumphant Return' ('Duhai kaixuan' 渡海凯旋) (**Fig. 3.5**). Although the sea and the Qing war junks are shown in the first two prints, the action is clearly taking place on land. In the 'Battle of Kuzhai', the Qing troops are conducting a dramatic pursuit of the rebels on horseback and in the 'Capture of Zhuang Datian', a raid on a coastal settlement is taking place as the sampans dislodge their military passengers. In both prints, the war junks, clearly understood as conveyors of troops, maintain a stately presence that is both distant and passive. The almost diagrammatic interaction between land and sea is suggestive of an already established convention and, as discussed in Chapter 2, is reflected in later popular victory pictures (see Figs. 2.1a, 2.1b and 2.18).

The final print of the series 'Crossing the Ocean and Triumphant Return' is a visually striking scene that employs the snaking-line device (**Fig. 3.5**). But here, the hilly terrain and the foot soldiers have been supplanted by rolling waves and a line of vessels stretched out towards the horizon as if disappearing into infinity. It shows an awareness of navigational technology. The eye from within the print, as distinguished from the eye of us the viewer, is directed landwards to continental China. That an imperial-victory picture would have ended with a scene like this marks out just how different the *Pacification of Taiwan* is from the others. The other series' invariably end with a return to Beijing, with scenes depicting the presentation of captives to the emperor or the victory banquet in the Forbidden City.³⁶⁸ They begin with scenes that bring a sense of the journey and subsequent arrival to the destination of war, usually by marking out distinctive geographical characteristics of the region (see, for example, Fig. 1.13, 'Recovering Little Jinchuan', the opening print from the *Jinchuan* series). Interestingly, this is absent from the *Taiwan* series, which launches the viewer directly into the thick of action on land ('Battle at Dabulin' 大埔林之战). The *Taiwan* series is therefore notable for both the absence and presence, respectively, of maritime scenes from the beginning and end of this particular victory narrative. How should we read this 'absence and presence'?³⁶⁹ On a purely visual level, we can regard it as an effective device both

³⁶⁸ For comparison with the other imperial victory pictures, see Weng, ed. 2001 and the website <http://www.battle-of-qurman.com.cn/e/hist.htm>.

³⁶⁹ I use this term with some license and in a very literal way. Usually it is used as a theoretical construct to reading works of art and images that primarily relates to metaphysical notions and the alignment of presence with truthful representation (see, for example, Martin Heidegger's *Being and Time* and Jacques Derrida's *Of Grammatology*). More recently, it has been applied to the analysis of

aesthetically and narratologically. While avoiding the repetition of too many formulaic maritime scenes within one series, it also serves at the end to bring a different dimension to the idea of a victory parade. On an interpretational level, we could perhaps read into it an ambivalent feeling of both fascination and fear for the open seas that underscores the idea of the ocean as a barrier.

2. Parallels and Comparisons: The European Age of Sail in Pictures

Marine or maritime art is generally defined as any form of figurative art (especially painting, prints and drawings) that draws its inspiration from the sea. In particular, maritime painting —the depiction of ships on the ocean— flourished in Europe and America from the 17th to the 19th century.³⁷⁰ Historians of Western art have noted that from Late Antiquity to the end of the Middle Ages, marine art was still not a distinct genre. Images of marine subjects were used when required for narrative purposes like in the Bayeux Tapestry depicting the Norman invasion of England.³⁷¹ Parallels can be drawn in Chinese painting to the appearance of small boats in a river as a component of literati landscape; the appearance of trading barges in tropes related to the prosperous city like the *Qingming shanghe tu* 清明上河圖, or ceremonial fleets on the inspection tours to southern China (*Nanxun tu* 南巡圖) made by the emperors Qianlong and Kangxi (see Fig. 1. 5).

From as early as the 15th century, a new consciousness of the sea was noted in Early Netherlandish painting. As Kenneth Clark observes of *The Prayer on the Shore*, a now lost miniature from the Turin-Milan Hours (c. 1420), ‘the seashore beyond [the figures in the foreground] is completely outside the fifteenth-century range of responsiveness’.³⁷² Over the next three centuries, advances in European navigation technology and shipbuilding enabled the Voyages of Discovery, the emergence of maritime-based international trade and the establishment of seaborne empires by the Portuguese, the Dutch and the English. Oar-propelled galleys gave way to fully rigged sailing ships that enabled travel and survival in the tough conditions of open seas. Until then, war at sea was not very different from

‘ruins’ in China (Wu Hung, *A Story of Ruins: Presence and Absence in Chinese Art and Visual Culture*, London: Reaktion Books, 2012).

³⁷⁰ David Cordingly, ‘Marine painting’, *Grove Art Online. Oxford Art Online*, Oxford University Press (<http://www.oxfordartonline.com/subscriber/article/grove/art/T054395>, accessed 15 July 2013).

³⁷¹ Margarita Russell, *Visions of the Sea: Hendrick C. Vroom and the origins of Dutch marine painting*, Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1983, p. 51.

³⁷² Kenneth Clark, *Landscape into Art*, London: John Murray, 1949, pp. 31-32

war on land: the ship served as a platform for launching weapons like the bow and arrow or as a launch pad for boarding the enemy vessel for combat with melee weapons.³⁷³ This is the method of warfare that is contemplated in the Chinese depictions previously discussed, from the *Chouhai tubian* to the maritime scenes in the *Pacification of Taiwan* series. However, in the West, as the ships became larger, the increased displacement tonnage allowed cannons to be carried on board. It would change the dynamics of ship-to-ship combat. Now capable of long-range fire, ships themselves became weapons of destruction by the end of the 15th century.

In Europe, from the 16th century onwards, these developments would transform the relationship between man and the ocean, and between nations. The unbounded, non-contiguous nature of the open waters allowed nations to acquire wealth and prestige without the burdens of territorial conquest. The increasingly prominent activities of naval and merchant fleets gave rise to a popular fascination with the sea, which was first visually expressed through paintings and prints as ship's portraits, the depiction of naval battle scenes and subsequently topographical and cartographical landscapes. The first known ship's portraits were by an anonymous Netherlandish engraver, referred to as 'Master W with the key' (act. c. 1465-90) after his monogram (**Fig. 3.6**). Known mostly for his architectural ornament prints, it has been suggested that the ship series may have been a commission from Charles the Bold of Burgundy (r. 1467-77) to depict the vessels in his ducal fleet.³⁷⁴ These prints are modest in size (approx. 17 x 12 cm) and are typical of the genre: invariably shown crewless even under sail.

Almost contemporaneous with the *Chouhai tubian* illustrations in Figure 3.2a and of similar dimensions, they make for interesting comparison. Both have different objectives. The Netherlandish print was conceived as a work of art and, as such, aesthetics were at the forefront: it showcases the skill of the printmaker in sketching, carving of the block and controlling the ink tonality during the printing process. The artist has depicted the ship with its sails furled, arrow pointing right, pitched forward by the rolling waves. The impression of volume and three-dimensionality has been attempted by shading and the use of hatching in varying levels of intensity. The pictures in the *Chouhai tubian*, on the other hand, were

³⁷³ Nicholas A. M. Rodger, *The Safeguard of the Sea: A Naval History of Britain 660–1649*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1997, pp. 205-6.

³⁷⁴ Russell, pp. 51-52.

primarily functional: they accompanied texts and assisted in providing information for the reader. Since they are ‘*tu* 圖’ pictures/diagrams, as opposed to ‘*hua* 畫’ or painting, in the visual hierarchy, the assumption was that aesthetic considerations were secondary to its practical intention.³⁷⁵ The illustrations are two-dimensional and conventionalized: both sea and ship do not interact with each other but are merely a combination of motifs to provide context. There is little visually to distinguish between the two vessels on facing pages except their titles which inform us that the ship on the left page is notable for its large bow (*datou* 大頭) and the one on the right has a pointed stern (*jianwei* 尖尾).

The earliest extant print, and most likely the first ever, of an *actual* naval battle is one depicting the *Battle of Zonchio* (in the Ionian Sea, north of the Peloponnese) in 1499 (**Fig. 3.7**).³⁷⁶ Fought by the Ottomans and the Venetians, it took place during the second of seven wars between these two adversaries from the mid-15th to the early 18th century for control of the Mediterranean. The Venetians, greatly outnumbered by the Ottoman fleet were roundly defeated. The battle is a significant event in naval history as cannons were used on board ships for the first time. This development is commemorated in the print as can be seen in the detail of a row of firing cannons on the lower decks emitting red flames (see **Fig. 3.7a**).³⁷⁷ The print itself shows three entangled vessels: two Venetian carracks (as identified by the banners ‘Nave Loredana’ and ‘Nave Delarmer’) charging towards a third Ottoman vessel (‘Nave Turchesa’), lying horizontal across pictorial space, starboard side showing. There is also a wealth of detail that shows the weapons used and the drama and chaos of melee combat in the mediaeval period.³⁷⁸ From the information provided by captions and the banners, we know it depicts a critical event in the battle on 25 September 1499, when the crews of carracks led by Andrea Loredan (Loredana) and Alban d’Armer (Delarmer) attempted to board one of the Ottoman command vessels. Turkish accounts

³⁷⁵ Clunas, 1997, pp. 102-11.

³⁷⁶ *The Battle of Zonchio (Navarino)*

(http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/highlights/highlight_objects/pd/t/the_battle_of_zonchio_navari_n.aspx, accessed 16 July 2013).

³⁷⁷ The colour in *Zonchio* has been applied by stencilling which is less complicated than Chinese colour woodblock printing. In the *douban* 鈐版 and *taoban* 套版 techniques, colour was isolated from the original draft, creating separate segments of the image. These segments were carved on to different woodblocks, which had to be registered and printed separately and in sequence to create a facsimile of the original.

³⁷⁸ Susan Rose, *Medieval Naval Warfare, 1000-1500*, New York and London: Routledge, 2003, p. 124

mention that a Burak Reis captained the ship. Burning pitch that was being used to attack the Venetians went out of control, setting all three ships ablaze. It was said that the dramatic sight of the three burning vessels demolished Venetian morale and fighting ended that day. Loredan died with his flaming ship, the *Pandora*, and d'Armer was captured and brought back to Istanbul where he was sawn to pieces at the order of Bayazid II.³⁷⁹

However, the scene depicted is not the dramatic one of the three burning ships but of the point when the three vessels come into contact. We can perhaps read into the scene a conflation of the narrative: instead of the unknown Burak Reis, 'Chmali' or Kemal Reis (Ahmed Kemaleddin, c. 1451-1511), the infamous corsair and admiral of the Ottoman fleet, is shown in the Turkish ship. It is thus not just the boarding scene that is being represented here but also the battle as a whole. Loredan became the hero of this episode since he was already well known as the scion of a powerful family and for his swashbuckling antics in Venice. Absent from the scene is Antonio Grimani, the *capitano da mar* (sea commander-in-chief), who ended the war in disgrace and was sent into exile. The print is ascribed to an unknown Italian, most likely Venetian, printmaker. There had been an explosion in the sale and production of single-sheet prints in the mid-15th century. They were produced cheaply and in large numbers. By the beginning of the 16th century, when the *Zonchio* print was produced, woodcuts had become the most important medium for producing images of topical interest in Europe.³⁸⁰ Although we can neither be sure of *Zonchio's* print run nor its audience³⁸¹, parallels and comparisons can be made with the victory pictures in China. *Zonchio* and later European works in this vein pre-empt the imperial victory pictures. Indeed, their dimensions are startlingly similar. Although this is not to say victory pictures are European in origin, it serves to underscore their distinctiveness as a genre that developed in the Qianlong reign and, as discussed in Chapter One, how different they were from pre-existing modes of depicting war in China. As prints created by the vanquished side, visual comparisons can also be made with the popular 19th

³⁷⁹ Ibid., pp. 100-22.

³⁸⁰ See David Landau and Peter Parshall. *The Renaissance Print, 1470–1550*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994.

³⁸¹ Only a single copy of the print survives in the British Museum – it came from a famous album of woodcuts owned by Rupert II in Prague. It is also recorded in the inventory of a now-lost collection that belonged to Ferdinand Columbus, the son of Christopher Columbus (see link footnote 375).

century versions as well: *Zonchio* is almost neutral in its stance, with its minimal text used to identify the main characters and objects—unless you can read bias into the foregrounding of the two Venetian carracks. Perhaps it can even be said that the *Zonchio* print is closer to the classification of a late 19th century *shishi hua* than the victory pictures are!

Maritime scenes initially evolved along with landscapes and history painting, impacted by the growth of interest in geography and advancements in cartography. For example, in these early pictures, the view of ships half-seen over the horizon indicated an awareness of the curvature of the earth, and the bird's-eye, panoramic or topographic views of cities, landscapes and coastal regions were adapted from cartographic practices.³⁸² From the 16th century onwards, these developments could be seen most clearly in Dutch art. The understanding of what a picture was had changed. The artist no longer saw it as the Renaissance ideal of 'a plane serving as a window that assumed a human observer' but as a surface for capturing a wide range of knowledge and information.³⁸³ This descriptive instinct foreshadows the 'pictorial turn' in China discussed in Chapter 2. Ultimately it was neither the medium of the picture nor its expressiveness that mattered. Thus artists moved easily between painting and print, and different modes of picturing.³⁸⁴

It was in this environment that maritime art gradually came to have an independent identity. The earliest extant 'pure maritime painting' is said to be *Portuguese Carracks off a Rocky Coast*, a work by an unknown Flemish artist, dated circa 1540.³⁸⁵ An early battle scene that incorporated the topographical harbour-view genre was Pieter Breughel the Elder's *Naval Battle in the Gulf of Naples* dated 1560 (**Fig. 3.7**). The defeat of the Spanish Armada invited the production of numerous prints, and depictions of the event continued to be produced even through the 18th century. As warfare on water became increasingly commonplace, the demand for maritime scenes grew. In this naval arena, as battle scenes and ship's portraits dominated, the emphasis was on correct detailed representations. Artists came to specialize in maritime scenes, for example, Reinier Nooms (c. 1623

³⁸² Russell, pp. 24-32, 45-46.

³⁸³ Alpers, pp. 122, 138.

³⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 136.

³⁸⁵ Russell., pp. 40-41; in the collection of the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich (accessed 29 July 2013, <http://collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/12197.html#.UfYh7aI0WT4.email>.)

– c. 1667), a former sailor who signed his works of as ‘Zeeman’, Dt seaman), made paintings and etchings of scenes from the Anglo-Dutch Wars known for their precision and accuracy.³⁸⁶

By comparison, no such communion between purposeful and artistic pictures, painting and print developed during the same period in China. Marine scenes, usually shown in the bounded environment of rivers and lakes, continued to play supporting roles in documentary and narrative paintings. Pictures, *tu*, mostly found in books were largely accompanied by texts and, in most instances, were subservient to them. Accuracy in scientific detail was not demanded in Chinese painting. Literati painting, the most privileged class favoured abstraction and non-likeness, and adhered to an orthodoxy that favoured painting landscapes based on earlier models and not the natural world.

II Barbarians at the Gate: The Arrival of Export Art

Looking at the geopolitics of the 17th and 18th century, the concept of ‘sea power’ was articulated by Alfred Thayer Mahan (1840-1914), a US naval officer and historian, in 1890. Citing the Netherlands and England as examples, he attributed the rise of empires during this seminal period to their ability to control the seas through military, commercial and technological means. Sea-borne empires were born out of the necessity of having ports for shelter and safety along the trade routes.³⁸⁷ The Anglo-Dutch Wars³⁸⁸ during this period were fought entirely on water by the navies of the respective countries over control of the sea and also for trade routes. Although the Dutch were initially dominant, their power waned when the Netherlands were absorbed by France during the Napoleonic wars of the early 19th century. British naval superiority made it difficult for France to establish new colonies away from Europe and French international trade suffered due to a British blockade. The British victory at the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805 ensured that Napoleon was never a challenge at sea for the British again.

Of interest to the art historian are the visual and material cultures generated by the navy and the global maritime trade, the two pillars of sea power. Depictions of naval battles and the art from the China trade are discussed

³⁸⁶ Seymour Slive, *Dutch Painting, 1600-1800*, *Pelican History of Art* series, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1995, pp. 220-24.

³⁸⁷ A.T. Mahan, *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History, 1660-1783*, [first published 1890], e-book version, Project Gutenberg, 2007, sections 475-1252 of 10,722.

³⁸⁸ Usually regarded as four wars taking place in 1652–54, 1665–67, 1672–74 and 1781–84.

in this section as I suggest that they provided both visual templates and developed artistic skills that were key to developing the *shuizhan tu*.

1. Naval Victory as a Visual Paradigm

By the time the Anglo-Dutch wars began in the mid-17th century, Dutch maritime art had already established conventions for depicting naval battles. An elevated perspectival view was usually used. The pictorial space was divided into three distances: in the foreground, sinking wrecks of enemy ships often functioned like a *repoussoir* that opened out to reveal key moments of significant vessels in the battle at middle ground; while, in the far distance, other episodes or skirmishes could be glimpsed (**Fig. 3.9a**). In popular broadsheets that were first produced in Holland, and then in England, this simplified visual schema was often accompanied by explanatory text, and titles in decorative cartouches making assertions like ‘perfect representation’, ‘exact delineation’, ‘true depiction’ for the authoritative basis of the picture (**Fig. 3.9b**).³⁸⁹

Aside from their pictorial formats and motifs, these pictures, especially those in print, are relevant to aspects of the discussion on the *desheng tu*, in particular, the organization and the presentation of information. Figure 3.9b, which depicts the Four Day Battle that took place near North Foreland in England from 11-14 June 1666 during the Second Anglo-Dutch War, is an instructive Dutch broadsheet. There is no headline, but a description of what the picture is about has been written into a cartouche shaped like a proclamatory scroll, topped by a celebratory laurel—signifiers of victory. In translation, the caption reads: ‘Perfect Representation and Description [*Perfecte Vertoonigh en volkomen verhael*]... 11, 12, 13, 14, June, AD 1666. De Ruyter forces Albemarle to fight with an inferior force, the latter joined Prince Rupert [Dutch and English Commanders], a gale stops the action, Evertsen [Admiral Cornelis Evertsen, 1610-66] was killed. Four Days Fight 1-4 June 1666.’³⁹⁰ The tone is terse and factual, showing no bias, in accordance with its claims to accuracy. The scene itself does not depict a specific event but is a conflated narrative that the viewer can pick out with the assistance of the chart beneath that lists out the key ships

³⁸⁹ Sarah Monks. ‘Our man in Havana: representation and reputation in Lieutenant Philip Orsbridge’s *Britannia’s Triumph* (1765)’ in John Bonehill and Geoff Quilley, eds, *Conflicting Visions: War and Visual Culture in Britain and France, c. 1700-1830*. Aldershot and Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, 2005, pp. 85-6.

³⁹⁰ See Royal Museums Greenwich, <http://collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/147546.html>

and personalities. Pre-dating the popular victory pictures in China by almost two centuries, both have a similar tone emphasising reportage and accuracy, and assertions to authenticity (see Fig. 2.18). In both pictures, it is the text and not the pictures that direct the act of viewing. These connections suggest possible templates for the victory pictures that lie beyond the imperial Qing models, a direction that is further developed later in the specific discussion of the *shuizhan tu*.

By the end of the 17th century, the influx of Dutch artists escaping from French-occupied Holland brought their skills to England. The conventions of naval battle scenes were thus appropriated, popularized and anglicized for the local audience.³⁹¹ For example, Fred Shantroon's engraving depicting the capture of the strategic Spanish base of Porto Bello in Panama in 1740 is practically a copy of the *Battle of Malaga* by the Dutch émigré artist Isaac Sailmaker (1633-1721), notwithstanding the locations (**Figs 3.9a and b**).³⁹² The 18th century was a period of constant warfare among European nations on the continent and in their colonies. Many such prints would claim 'reportage' status notwithstanding that the depictions followed conventions rather than a specific event. Participants in battle, officials especially, were co-opted into this cycle of representation: first providing eyewitness accounts for artists and then later contributing their own dispatches, drawings and sketches for publication.³⁹³ These developments coincided with a period when the navy in England was being professionalized and institutionalized. Among the skills that officers were expected to require were drawing and draughtsmanship.³⁹⁴

Over time the visuality of the sea moved away from its Dutch roots and, in England, it became a powerful tool in formulating the image of Britain as a maritime nation. Geography determined that insular Britain would choose a navy over the army.³⁹⁵ Throughout the 18th century, naval victories were celebrated in multimedia not only through art but also in the theatre and in exhibition spaces.

³⁹¹ Ibid, p. 86.

³⁹² An oil painting version of the Battle of Malaga print is in the collection of the National Maritime Museum (see <http://collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/11832.html>).

³⁹³ Monks, p. 87.

³⁹⁴ Ibid., pp. 93-94.

³⁹⁵ Geoff Quilley, *Empire to Nation: Art, History and the Visualization of Maritime Britain, 1768-1829*, New Haven: Published for the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art by Yale University Press, 2011, pp. 3-9.

Popular culture fostered a 'nationalist cult of the maritime' by making constant references to Britain's maritime history. By the 1790s, there were increasing calls for a public monument to naval glory.³⁹⁶ This nationalist spirit reached a climax in the Battle of Trafalgar with the British victory at the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805, where a fleet of 27 ships led by Admiral Nelson faced off 33 ships from Napoleon's Franco-Spanish coalition and sank 22 vessels. The battle engendered a range of visual responses that ranged from the documentary and the commemorative to the satirical in both elite and popular culture. Dramatic paintings of the battle and the death of Admiral Nelson by noted masters of the day like J.M.W. Turner and Benjamin West³⁹⁷ were reproduced as engravings well into the 19th century ensuring that a successful pictorial strategy was continuously enforced in the minds of the public.

2. Picturing the China Trade

The Portuguese were the first Europeans to arrive by ship to China in 1517. From about the mid-1550s, they were allowed to use Macau as a trading post. The Dutch had conquered Taiwan in the 1620s with the intention of establishing a base there for trading with China. They co-operated with the Manchu to defeat Ming loyalists in the Amoy-Quemoy (Xiamen 廈門-Jinmen 金門) coastal areas before falling out with the Qing government. By the end of the 17th century, the Dutch had lost interest in direct trade with China, preferring instead to deal with Chinese merchants who brought their junks to Batavia. Sensing the profitability of the European maritime trade, the Qing stepped in to regulate it. After 1757, trade was restricted to Canton under the watchful eye of customs officials. At this time, as there was very little desire for European goods, the Chinese attitude was very much in the 'tradition of accepting trade on the frontier as a means of pacifying non-Chinese groups'.³⁹⁸

³⁹⁶ Ibid., pp. 194-8.

³⁹⁷ For example, by J.M.W. Turner: *The Battle of Trafalgar, as seen from the Mizen Starboard Shrouds of the Victory*, 1806-8 in Tate Britain and *The Battle of Trafalgar, 21 October 1805*, 1823-4 in National Maritime Museum (see <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/turner-the-battle-of-traffic-as-seen-from-the-mizen-starboard-shrouds-of-the-victory-n00480> and <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/turner-the-battle-of-traffic-21-october-1805-tw0522>); by Benjamin West: *The Death of Nelson*, c. 1806 in the Walker Gallery Liverpool (<http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/walker/collections/19c/west.aspx>)

³⁹⁸ James Graham, 'China's Growing Sea Trade with Europe 1517-1800' (Parts 1 and 2), *Historyorb.com* (http://www.historyorb.com/asia/china_trade.php and http://www.historyorb.com/asia/china_trade2.php, accessed 1 August 2013).

This so-called Canton trade system reflected the Qing empire at the height of its might and its eventual collapse in the mid-19th century ushered in an era of change as well as decline and national humiliation for China. Tea, decorative arts and luxury objects—porcelain, silk, lacquer and furniture—were some of the constituent items that made up the China Trade. Not content just to purchase ready-to-buy objects, foreign merchants and consumers commissioned their own designs. Given the great perils and high profits involved, it was not surprising that those in the trade would wish to have their participation recorded. The phenomenon—now referred to as ‘Chinese export painting’—which developed around Canton at the end of the 18th century, was not part of the mainstream Chinese painting tradition.³⁹⁹ These painters, largely self-taught, adapted their practices to include Western pictorial technology (like perspective), media (oils on canvas or glass, enamels on porcelain), and subject matter.⁴⁰⁰

Elements of maritime art, in particular, ship’s portraits and topographical harbour scenes were co-opted by the export-art repertoire. These were not only depicted as conventional paintings on canvas but could be found decorating sets of porcelain and other forms of decorative arts as well. A typical early dated example is the series of *famille-rose* dishes and plates depicting the *Vryburg*, a Dutch East Indiaman that sailed between Holland and China between 1748 and 1771 (**Fig. 3.11**). According to inscriptions on these plates they were made specifically to commemorate a 1756 journey to Whampoa—some of the inscriptions mention the ship’s captain Jacob Ryzik, while the example illustrated here from the British Museum mentions the chief mate Christian Schooneman.⁴⁰¹ Although topographical scenes are most often seen in paintings and most famously on the ‘Hong bowls’, they were also painted on fans: an example dated

³⁹⁹ Patrick Conner, *Chinese Views – Western Perspectives 1770-1870: The Sze Yuan Tang Collection of China Coast Paintings and The Wallem Collection of China Coast Ship Portraits*, exh. cat., London: Asia House, 1997, pp. 8-9; Peter Perdue, ‘Rise and Fall of the Canton Treaty System—I: China in the World (1700-1860s)’, *MIT Visualizing Cultures* (http://ocw.mit.edu/ans7870/21f/21f.027/rise_fall_canton_01/cw_essay01.html), accessed 1 August 2013).

⁴⁰⁰ Hong Kong Museum of Art (HKMA), *Artistic Inclusion of the East and West: Apprentice to Master*, exh. cat., Hong Kong: Hong Kong Museum of Art, 2011, p. 107.

⁴⁰¹ Regina Krahel and Jessica Harrison-Hall, *Ancient Chinese Trade Ceramics from the British Museum, Taipei: National Museum of History*, 1994, p. 26. *Vryburg* plates can be found in the collections of the Musée Guimet, Zeeland Museum, Middelburg and the Rijksmuseum. (see http://www.christies.com/lotFinder/lot_details.aspx?intObjectID=3713490 for a list of published examples, accessed 2 August 2013).

circa 1784 shows a harbour scene with the *Empress of China*, the first American ship to trade in Canton (**Fig. 3.12**).⁴⁰²

What were the possible sources of instruction for these artists? Since they operated within a workshop system, it is unlikely that they would have had many opportunities to go to the harbour to paint or make preliminary sketches *en plein air* like their Western counterparts. There is also scholarly disagreement whether some Cantonese artists may have been students of Western painters based around the Pearl River Delta.⁴⁰³ The artists actually gave themselves away in their own works depicting their practices: they were invariably shown copying from models — sketches, paintings, mostly prints and later photographs (**Fig. 3.13**). A contemporary account of Lamqua's workshop mentions that 'his walls were decorated with his own copies of English paintings, and he possesses the engraved works of British artists'.⁴⁰⁴ As noted by Carl Crossman, during the early days of the Canton Trade, oil paintings based on Western prints were produced in considerable numbers and were extremely faithful to the originals.⁴⁰⁵

For the topographical paintings, in particular, it seemed ironical that the Cantonese artists had to rely on Western interpretations of their own native scenery. Nevertheless, European travellers had been depicting China since the mid-17th century. One of the earliest such views of the Canton harbour was by Johan Nieuhof (1618-72), who had been in the service of the Dutch East India Company (VOC), and was in 1654 appointed as steward of a mission to China (**Fig. 3.14**). His account and illustrations of the two-year journey to and from Canton and Beijing was first published in Europe in 1665.⁴⁰⁶ There is little to

⁴⁰² Peter Perdue, 'Rise and Fall of the Canton Treaty System—IV', 'Commodities', *MIT Visualizing Cultures* (http://ocw.mit.edu/ans7870/21f/21f.027/rise_fall_canton_04/cw_gal_03_thumb.html), accessed 1 August 2013).

⁴⁰³ The most well discussed being the relationship between George Chinnery (1774-1852) and Lamqua (act. 1825-60). Chinnery was said to have 'stoutly denied' that Lamqua was his pupil. Since the Lamqua was already capable of sophisticated portraits within two years of Chinnery's arrival in China, Patrick Conner takes the view that it seems unlikely that the latter would have wanted would have wanted to nurture a rival. (Patrick Conner, 'Lamqua: Western and Chinese Painter', *Arts of Asia*, vol. 29, no. 2 [March-April 1999], pp. 50-51; HKMA, 2011, p. 103).

⁴⁰⁴ Osmond Tiffany Jr., *The Canton Chinese or the American's Sojourn in the Celestial Empire*, Boston: James Munroe, 1849, p. 85.

⁴⁰⁵ Carl L. Crossman, *The Decorative Arts of the China Trade: Paintings, Furnishings and Exotic Curiosities*, Suffolk: Antique Collectors' Club, 1991, pp. 162, 167.

⁴⁰⁶ Later published in English as *An Embassy from the East-India Company of the United Provinces, to the Grand Tartar Cham, Emperor of China*, London, 1673 (<http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/DLDecArts.Nieuhof>, accessed 14 August 2013).

distinguish Nieuhof's *The City Quang Chew, or Kanton* from the generic European cityscape, apart from its title, the pagodas rising above the walled city and a few sampans in the foreground. Nieuhof was using an established pictorial strategy that would remain unchanged for several centuries.⁴⁰⁷ Prints like that would have provided models for Chinese artists.⁴⁰⁸ This process of appropriating the West by Chinese artists can be seen from comparing Nieuhof's print with the *Empress of China* fan. Both share in common the combination of a low horizon with the sweeping sky, a visual effect that was supposed to give the viewer a sense of being mid-air and seeing from a distance. However, export artists often had to negotiate through unfamiliar pictorial technology, media and formats. For example, the perspective had to be adapted from the angular frame of the print to the curvilinear fan. In the case of the *Empress of China*, the monochrome palette of the fan is unusual given the highly coloured and elaborate versions that are normally seen. It seems almost as if the export painter at this early stage was mediating between their traditional ink-and-brush medium and the requirements of their new customers.

To use Craig Clunas's terminology, European 'pictures *of* things' were thus used by Chinese artists and craftsmen to make 'pictures *on* things'. Unlike the Ming phenomenon that generated the multi-layered referentiality which Clunas describes, the epistemological scope of those creating export art did not extend beyond the mimetic.⁴⁰⁹

III The Visuality of Knowledge: Envisaging a Modern Navy for China

1. The Traditional Qing Water Force

In the age of sea power, the new empires came to be based on ships, guns and commercial goods but, as can be seen from the imperial victory pictures, the Qing concept of empire and expansion was one that remained essentially land locked. Notwithstanding the influx of foreigners through the growth of the China Trade, the Qing state continued to conduct its foreign relations through the tribute system. The failure of the McCartney Mission in 1793 had demonstrated how

⁴⁰⁷ See for example the consistency in the depiction of city views in the *Civitates Orbis Terrarum* notwithstanding the differences in location and geography.

⁴⁰⁸ Engravings of Chinese scenes that circulated globally in the late 18th and 19th centuries included those by Thomas (1749-1840) and William (1769-1837) Daniell, William Alexander (1767-1816), and Thomas Allom (1804-72), who did not even visit China.

⁴⁰⁹ Clunas, 1997, pp. 55-57.

unfamiliar Westerners were with Chinese culture and custom, and how out-of-step the Qing state was with global currents in trade and diplomacy.⁴¹⁰ While Western traders were agitating for greater access beyond the confines of Canton, it appeared at the beginning of the 19th century that the maritime concepts and concerns of consolidating coastal defences and exterminating piracy appeared little changed from 15th century. Until the mid-19th century, a Water Force that was part of the Chinese Green Banner land force, and had a status similar to that of a provincial constabulary policed the coastal waters. The building of war junks was strangely the responsibility of the civilian Board of Works in Beijing. The Qing Water Force was strictly anti-piratical, with no strategy or tradition of far-ranging, long-term purposeful missions.⁴¹¹

The Qing focus could be seen in an 18-metre-long handscroll entitled *Jinghai quantu* 靖海全圖 (*Pacifying of the South China Sea*) that depicts the 1809-10 campaign waged by Bailing 百齡 (1748-1806), the Viceroy of Liangguang, against the pirate Zhang Baozai 張保仔 (1783-1822), who was said to have more than 50,000 followers and a fleet of 600 ships (**Fig. 3.15**).⁴¹² While it is unclear who the handscroll was made for and when it was made, the opening section entitled 'The Strategy for Coastal Defence' (*haifang dingce* 海防定策) underscores the priorities of officialdom and the documentary purpose for such a work. The scroll comprises twenty scenes which follow the trajectory of the victory picture narrative; key scenes include the torching of pirate ships (*huogong daosou* 火攻盜艘), a key battle in Lantau island (*Dayu kunzei* 大嶼困賊) and the surrender of Zhang (*pinghai shouxian* 平海受降), who joined the Qing navy as a colonel and spent the remainder of his life policing the waters of Penghu.⁴¹³ As shown from this detail, the engagement between the pirates and the Qing troops is not a naval battle envisaged in European maritime art from the 18th century onwards (**see Figs 3.7-10**), rather it resembles an engagement between land forces which happen to be transported by water wagons. It is the narrative of victory that is

⁴¹⁰ Maxine Berg, 'Britain, Industry and Perceptions of China: Matthew Boulton, "Useful Knowledge" and the Macartney Embassy to China 1792-4', *Journal of Global History*, vol. 1 (2), July 2006, pp. 269-288.

⁴¹¹ John L. Rawlinson, *China's Struggle for Naval Development, 1839-1895*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1967, pp. 4-13.

⁴¹² Xiao Guojian and Bo Yongjian (annotations), '*Jinghai fenji yuanwenbiaodian jianzhu*', *Tianya yu Wenxian: Huanan yanjiu ziliao zhongxin tongxun* 46 (2007), pp. 8-20.

⁴¹³ Examined the scroll when it was on display in the Hong Kong Maritime Museum in April 2012.

privileged here and the sea still remains an incidental element in the unfolding of the story.

This view of the sea and the vessels that sailed in Chinese waters would rapidly change in the aftermath of the first Opium War. In 1816, the British sent another embassy to Beijing under the leadership of Lord Amherst (1773-1857) to seek an audience with the Jiaqing emperor 嘉慶 (r. 1796-1820); stumbling blocks similar to that experienced by the McCartney mission led to its failure. The refusal by the Viceroy of Canton to allow the embassy's ships, *Alceste* and *General Hewett*, to enter the port resulted in an exchange between the *Alceste* and the forts at Boca Tigris. Considered one of the earliest salvos fired in the Qing empire's conflict with the Western powers, the incident is commemorated by an aquatint based on sketch by John McLeod the surgeon on the *Alceste* (**Fig. 3.16**).⁴¹⁴ While it may have been a minor incident, McLeod's illustration bears a triumphant and militant caption—'The Engagement of CAPT SIR MURRAY MAXWELL in the H.M.S. ALCESTE, 1816, with the CHINESE FORTRESSES in the Boca Tigris, both of which he immediately silenced.'— an irony given the outcome of the embassy. The print is remarkable for its depiction of a night scene but more significantly it lays out a pattern of conflict for the rest of the century—of foreign warships in engagement in with Chinese forts—that becomes a recurring motif in popular victory pictures.

2. The Popular Culture of Curiosity

As foreign shipping flowed into Canton there developed a Chinese fascination with these Western vessels. Built with the capacity to hold bulky cargo and withstand perils of the sea, the East Indiamen resembled warships and dazzled with their huge size and heavy load of armament. By the late 18th and 19th century, East Indiamen, in particular, those used by the British in the China Trade were almost exclusively built in India. The hulls made from Indian teak ensured that they were ideally suited for sailing the waters of the South China Sea. These vessels were limited to the eastern waters and their destination points between India and China, thus facilitating the opium trade.⁴¹⁵ From the 1830s onwards, fleets of clippers would arrive at Canton to discharge their opium in exchange for

⁴¹⁴ HKMA, 2011, pp. 260-61, cat. no. 28.

⁴¹⁵ Fernand Braudel, *The Perspective of the World: Civilization & Capitalism, 15th–18th Century*, volume 3, New York: Harper & Row, 1979, p. 506.

tea. Built for speed, clippers had streamlined hulls and large sail areas. The ability to move fast ensured that tea and opium remained fresh for their consumers.⁴¹⁶

The arrival of steamships in the 1820s brought with them the potential to change the rules of the China Trade game. As the steamers were able to travel in shallow waters, they had the potential of going upriver and penetrating the Chinese heartland. The use of iron in their construction also meant that these vessels were strong enough to mount with heavy-duty ordnance as well as to withstand Chinese fire.⁴¹⁷ These armed boats exhaling smoke and fire, with their impressive powers of destruction, inspired awe and they were referred as ‘fire-boats’ (*huochuan* 火船). How the Chinese populace perceived these could be seen in a print from the British Library (**Fig. 3.17**). Two vessels are depicted: one, a British man-of-war and the other, one powered by steam, likely the iron-clad warship, *Nemesis*, which had seen action for the first time on 7 January 1842. The 55-line inscription—a mixture of the imaginary and the curious — reflects the ambivalence of the Chinese. The first 36 lines refer to a miraculous deliverance of red rain from Heaven in which the ‘foreign devils’ perish and then, oddly, a factual description:

The fire ship is of a warship's make
 Its length is three hundred cubits and more
 Its height and breadth are thirty and more
 Through its iron case it is strong and firm
 Its body is coloured all round with black
 It is like a shuttle that weaves the cloth
 On each of its sides it has fixed a wheel
 Which is moved by the use of burning coal
 And turns around like a galloping horse
 It has sails of white cloth of two different kinds
 If the wind before or against, it can go
 At the ship's head is the god of the waves
 From head to sail it is girt with guns
 Its shape and fashion astonish mankind. (Fig. 3.17a)⁴¹⁸

Over the next few decades, even as foreign merchants continued to commission Chinese painters to commemorate their trusty vessels in oils, the ship portrait,

⁴¹⁶ Perdue, ‘Rise and Fall of the Canton Treaty System—I’.

⁴¹⁷ Daniel R. Headrick, ‘The Tools of Imperialism: Technology and the Expansion of European Colonial Empires in the Nineteenth Century’, *The Journal of Modern History* 51 (2), 1979: 231–263.

⁴¹⁸ From the English translation that has been mounted together with the print as a handscroll. For complete text, see http://ocw.mit.edu/ans7870/21f/21f.027/opium_wars_01/scroll.html.

mediated through the media of print and folklore, would become a recurring motif that circulated throughout the empire. Western prints and engravings were well-received imports. As one correspondent for the *Illustrated London News* noted in 1858, pictures from his newspaper (many of which were maritime scenes) could be found decorating walls and junks.⁴¹⁹ As steamers became commonplace in treaty ports, and the Qing engaged in a grand enterprise to modernize the imperial navy, ships captured the public imagination, even in less urbanized, more remote regions. In 1868, when T.T. Cooper, an English businessman, set out on a journey from Shanghai towards Tibet; among the many things he noticed as evidence of the reach of foreign trade within the empire was a Chinese print of a foreign steamer in Hankou (probably not unlike the *Nemesis* print), on the road to Chengdu.⁴²⁰

As the Qing government began to acquire and produce their own steamships, vessels of the imperial navy garnered widespread interest. Iconic vessels, in particular, had special appeal. For example, this public enthusiasm could be read into a print of the cruiser *Kangji* 康濟 (**Fig. 3.18**). Launched on 2 July 1879 as a merchant ship, it had attracted attention as an early product of the Fuzhou Navy Yard (Fuzhou Zaochuan Chang 福州造船廠).⁴²¹ In 1883 the *Kangji* was taken over by the Beiyang fleet and, as one of the early projects of the Taku dockyards that had been established in 1881 in the north, it was transformed into a dispatch ship.⁴²² On 23 June 1884—coincidentally the day of the Bac Le massacre in Annam—Li Hongzhang used the *Kangji* as his flagship when he took a Beiyang squadron to meet Rear Admiral Lespés, whose fleet lay anchored at Chefoo (present-day Yantai 煙台, Shandong province) in an attempt to stave off a French naval attack.⁴²³ By 1891, refitted as a torpedo training ship, the *Kangji* took part in the well-publicised full-scale inspection all the imperial fleets.⁴²⁴

In the context of the Beiyang fleet, the *Kangji*'s role was a relatively modest one. Yet, perhaps because of the time it has spent in the public eye, printmakers thought it worthy of being depicted on its own, bearing the patriotic title *Daguo*

⁴¹⁹ *Illustrated London News*, 20 March 1858, p. 293; Bickers, p. 166.

⁴²⁰ T.T. Cooper, *Travels of a Pioneer of Commerce in Pigtail and Petticoats*, London: John Murray, 1871, Bickers p. 256.

⁴²¹ Richard N. J. Wright, *The Chinese Steam Navy*, London: Chatham Publishing, 2000, p. 55.

⁴²² *Ibid.*, p. 26.

⁴²³ *North China Herald*, 4 July 1884.

⁴²⁴ R. Wright, p. 84; Rawlinson, p. 253.

lunchuan 大國輪船 (*Steamships of a Great Nation*). As with popular prints, the craftsman-like style alludes to a more a generic rendering rather than a specific one, the flat black of the hull at odds with the slightly angled tilt of the masts that suggest three-dimensionality. While we neither know the *Kangji* print's place and context of manufacture, nor the numbers that were produced, it nevertheless serves as a valuable marking post in the scattered narrative of maritime depiction in China. The appearance of the rectangular Qing flag suggests that this print could not have been produced before 1889, when this form was adopted as the naval ensign and, not after 1896, when it had been renamed *Fuji* 復濟 (*fu* meaning to return, to recover), as the sole surviving ship from the Beiyang fleet after the disastrous defeat at the hands of the Japanese.⁴²⁵ Separated from the *Nemesis* print by almost half a century, it reflects the rapidly changing relationship China had with the sea and naval technology in the latter half of the 19th century. From viewing the steamship as wondrous fire-spitting aliens, the subjects of the Qing empire were claiming these vessels as their very own.

3. New Learning and Innovation: The Emergence of Technical Drawing

The era following the conclusion of the Second Opium War and the Taiping Rebellion is regarded as a period of 'restoration', where the Qing court returned from exile to a Beijing that had been subject to foreign occupation, and uncivilized rebels in the south, who had established a rival court at Nanjing, had been subdued.⁴²⁶ The court's return to 'normal' touched off a series of reforms that saw institutional changes and the adoption of Western learning, science and technology to mitigate the military defeats and concessions to foreign powers in the preceding two decades. This development known as the 'Self Strengthening' or 'Foreign Affairs' movement' (*zhiqiang yundong* 自強運動 or *yangwu yundong* 洋務運動) would see mechanized factories, shipyards, arsenals, technical schools and translation bureaux established in the large cities of China over a period of more than thirty

⁴²⁵ It was returned with full naval honours by the Japanese bearing the body of Admiral Ding Ruchang 丁汝昌 (1836-95) who, accepting responsibility for failure, had committed suicide. (R. Wright, pp. 105, 110).

⁴²⁶ Refers to the Tongzhi reign (1862-74). For aspects of restoration, see Mary Clabaugh Wright, *The Last Stand of Chinese Conservatism: The T'ung-Chih Restoration, 1862 -1874*, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1957, pp. 48-50; Rowe, pp. 202-09.

years (c. 1861-95).⁴²⁷ While the political, economic, technological, scientific and socio-cultural impact of the Self-Strengthening Movement have been well-studied by historians since the mid-20th century, primarily from word-based sources and text print culture, the role that the visual has played in the process of modernization has largely been obscured.

Schematic technical drawing, then considered a new form of visual communication from the West, was introduced to the public through Chinese-language publications like *The Peking Magazine* (*Zhongxi wenjian lu* 中西聞見錄, published by the Beijing School of Foreign Languages, 1872-75) and *The Chinese Scientific and Industrial Magazine* (*Gezhi huibian* 格致彙編, published by the Shanghai Polytechnic, 1876-92).⁴²⁸ The use of the term *wenjian* 聞見—to listen, to look—in the Chinese title is instructive as to how the new knowledge was to be approached. From the perspective of the Self-Strengthening Movement, the emphasis on looking is radical, a scopic regime that is diametrically opposed to the act of reading (*du* 讀) that is traditionally associated with literati learning and even the appreciation of painting (as in *duhua* 讀畫).⁴²⁹

However, the use of the visual in constructing bodies of knowledge, in particular those related to scientific and technological fields, was not so unfamiliar. Pictures/images (*tu* 圖) played an increasingly prominent role when a true print industry began to develop in the 10th century. The reproductive possibilities enabled by the use of woodblocks gave images an agency that was pedagogical, communicative and transformative.⁴³⁰ In the early 12th century, Zheng Qiao's 鄭樵 chapter on illustrated books ('Tupu lue' 圖譜略) in his encyclopaedic *Complete Treatises* (*Tongzhi* 通志) contemplated on the relationship between images and words, using the analogy of textile to describe it: *tu* were like the warp and the written word (*shu* 書) were like the weft which worked together to form the fabric

⁴²⁷ Benjamin A. Elman (2004). 'Naval Warfare and the Refraction of China's Self-Strengthening Reforms into Scientific and Technological Failure, 1865-1895'. *Modern Asian Studies* 38 (2004):283-326.

⁴²⁸ Reed, p. 75; Elman, 2004, pp. 301-09.

⁴²⁹ For the understanding of the meaning of 'du' in the context of Chinese painting and art history, see Clunas, 1997, pp. 119-20.

⁴³⁰ Francesca Bray, 'The Powers of Tu', in Francesca Bray, Vera Dorofeeva-Lichtmann, Georges Métailié (eds.), *Graphics and Text in the Production of Technical Knowledge in China: The Warp and the Weft*, volume 79 of Sinica Leidensia Series, Leiden: Brill, 2007, pp. 4, 25.

of the text (*wen* 文).⁴³¹ While the understanding of *tu* changed over time, by the early modern period, they were understood to be both schematic and representational; fields of technical knowledge that necessitated *tu* included cartography, the construction of implements or machines and military science.⁴³²

With the rise of the evidentiary movement, and its requirements for objectivity, correctness and accuracy, *tu* shed their cosmological functions and came to be primarily seen as ‘realistic’ maps.⁴³³ Its spectrum of applicability was thus limited; by the late 19th/early 20th century, the use of the term *tu* was primarily related to cartography or pictures that possessed a mapping instinct.⁴³⁴ Scholarly views —mostly relating to the absence of a scientific revolution in China— have also been advanced as to why *tu* never adopted the Cartesian-Euclidian perspective, and why *tu* did not develop the precision and professionalization associated with technical drawing, even though European practices of vision were known and studied in China since the 17th century, and popular printmakers and printers has playfully experimented with these optical effects (**Fig 3.19**).⁴³⁵ While it is beyond the scope of this thesis to offer an opinion on this complicated issue, the discourse is mentioned here as it helps to explicate aspects of the popular victory pictures discussed in this and other chapters.⁴³⁶

During and in the aftermath of the First Opium War (1839-42), imperial edicts and memoirs of provincial officials already showed a consciousness of the need to acquire Western-style firepower and warships. While Lin Zexu, the then Governor of Canton, is remembered as a classic, upright, conservative official whose valiant efforts to stop the opium trade ended in abject failure, his interest in acquiring Western technology as a means of coastal defence for China has been less

⁴³¹ Ibid., p. 1.

⁴³² Ibid., pp. 1-4.

⁴³³ Ibid., p. 55.

⁴³⁴ See Édouard Chavannes, ‘Les deux plus anciens spécimens de la cartographie chinoise’, *Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient* 3 (1903), pp. 214-47; Bray, pp. 6-8.

⁴³⁵ One the relationship between the visual culture of technical drawing and the scientific mentality, see Reed, p. 317, n. 228; Mark Elvin, *The Pattern of the Chinese Past: A Social and Economic Interpretation*, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1973, Chapter 13; Peter J. Golas, ‘Technical Representation in China: Tools and Techniques of the Trade.’ *East Asian Science, Technology and Medicine* 20 (2003): 11-44; Bray, pp. 26, 66-70.

⁴³⁶ See Kristina Renée Kleutghen, ‘The Qianlong emperor's perspective: illusionistic painting in eighteenth-century China’, PhD thesis, Harvard University, 2010; Hiromitsu Kobayashi, ‘Suzhou Prints and Western Perspective: The Painting Techniques of Jesuit Artists at the Qing Court, and Dissemination of the Contemporary Court Style of Painting to Mid-Eighteenth-Century Chinese Society through Woodblock Prints’, in John W. O’Malley, S.J., et al., *The Jesuits II: Cultures, Sciences, and the Arts, 1540-1773* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006), pp. 262-86.

discussed. Reading between the lines in accounts and memoirs of local literati who shared Lin's interest, there was a flurry of activity and experimentation between 1841-42 and, perhaps because only traces remain, the role pictures and drawings have played in understanding their adversaries has been overlooked. While we may not be able to reconstruct the scenario, we can surmise from these traces that the engagement with Western military and maritime technology was a visual process that had begun much earlier than the Self-Strengthening Movement.

As the geographer Wei Yuan 魏源 (1794-1857) had observed, when Lin arrived in Canton in 1839, he sent his men out every day to gather information about foreign affairs, purchase Western books and newspapers and had them translated.⁴³⁷ Lin contemplated how the Chinese war junk could be improved, looking at both traditional vessels used by neighbouring states as well as Western ships. During his tenure in Canton, he built models of the Annamese *ya* boat 安南帆船 which unfortunately could not be made to work.⁴³⁸ Of these attempts, the log for the *Nemesis* amusingly noted that around March 1840, 'the Chinese had purchased an English merchant ship, the *Cambridge*, intending to turn her into an English man-of-war, and built some strange-looking schooners upon a European model, with the view to employing them in some novel way or other against British ships'.⁴³⁹

In May 1841, as the British gunboats made their way up the Yangtze, Lin was removed from Canton and recalled to Zhejiang to assist in military affairs there. He arrived in Zhenhai anxious to discuss the question of warships with officials and shipbuilders and had brought with him pictures of eight fighting ship types. These included a two-decked, three-master, 34-gun Western vessel, an American vessel with 28 guns and a paddle-wheel ship which could be powered by hand or foot.⁴⁴⁰ Lin could not bring any of these projects to fruition as he was sent into exile in Ili a month later. When the British took Ningbo in October 1841, they discovered some

⁴³⁷ Chen, Gideon (Chen Qitian). *Lin Tse-Hsü: Pioneer Promoter of the Adoption of Western Means of Maritime Defense in China*. Peiping: Department of Economics, Yenching University, 1934, p. 7.

⁴³⁸ Wei Yuan, *Haiguo tuzhi*, *juan* 79, 1852 edition, p. 16; Chen, pp. 20-21

⁴³⁹ Bernard, William Dallas, with Sir William Hutcheon Hall. *Narrative of the voyages and services of the Nemesis, from 1840 to 1843*. London: H. Colburn, 1844, volume 1, p. 215.

⁴⁴⁰ Wei Yuan, 1852, *juan* 84, p. 27; Chen, p. 21, Rawlinson, pp. 19-20.

unassembled cogs, shafts and waterwheels—perhaps an abandoned attempt to build a wheel-boat.⁴⁴¹

In Canton, the discussions on improving defence and shipping continued even after Lin's departure. Although the designs that Lin had carried with him are now lost to history, three illustrations—taken from a manuscript entitled *Situation Maps for the Coastal Defence of Guangdong* (*Guangdong haifang xingshi tu* 廣東海防形勢圖) and published by Gideon Chen in 1934—depict experimental vessels constructed or designed by Lin's followers (**Figs. 3.20a and b**).⁴⁴² The design of Pan Shicheng 潘仕成 was a hybrid based on an American model; while retaining the mast and sails of the native junk, the hull was covered with copper (Fig. 3.20a). The first warship of this kind was completed in 1841 and three more were subsequently built.⁴⁴³ Admiral Wu Jianxun 吳建勳 proposed a warship that would not only have copper hulls and iron chains, but also extendable three-section masts that could be raised or lowered according to the strength of the wind (Fig. 3.20b).⁴⁴⁴ Although these drawings show an emerging awareness of maritime technology, their mode of rendition also revealed the level of the knowledge gap between China and the West—the images are not drawn to scale and are not accurate in the scientific or technical sense.

This experimentation coincided with Wei Yuan's writing of the *Treatise of the Sea Kingdoms* (*Haiguo tuzhi*, hereafter *HGTZ*), one of the earliest world geographies to 'describe the West as it appears to Westerners', to use the author's own words.⁴⁴⁵ The first edition was published in 1842 with 50 *juan* and another 50 *juan* were added in two subsequent editions (1847 and 1852). The later additions featured translations of the *Macao Monthly* and focused on the manufacture of warships, steamships, the use of mines on land and sea, and the use of the

⁴⁴¹ Rawlinson, p. 20.

⁴⁴² The manuscript was then in the Yenching University Library and authorship was attributed to Liang Jiping 梁濟平 (Chen, figs. 2-4).

⁴⁴³ Chen, p. 36; Wei Yuan, *juan* 84, pp. 24-25. The *Nemesis* logs also contain a description of such a vessel (Bernard, vol. 1, p. 280).

⁴⁴⁴ Chen, p. 37, Wei Yuan, *juan* 84, pp. 20-21.

⁴⁴⁵ Richard J. Smith, 'Mapping China and the Question of a China-Centered Tributary System', *The Asia-Pacific Journal*, vol. 11, no. 3, 28 January 2013 (http://www.japanfocus.org/-Richard_J_Smith/3888, accessed 20 August 2013.) However, Jane Kate Leonard's analysis positions Wei Yuan's maritime world in the context of geopolitics in the South China Sea rather than within the 'China and the West' binary. Rather than adopt Western approaches to maritime relations, the treatise is a call for innovation of the Qing military-naval system (*Wei Yuan and China's rediscovery of the maritime world*. Cambridge, MA: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, distributed by Harvard University Press, 1984, p. 204).

telescope.⁴⁴⁶ The illustrations in the *HGTZ* are early attempts to understand European technical drawing. For example, the steamship is shown in its entirety (*quantu* 全圖) together with top and side views, if somewhat inexpertly rendered (**Figure 3.21a and b**). These views, together with illustrations of the component parts of the ship, are spread over six pages. However, the deconstruction sequence is not logical with the *quantu* sandwiched in the middle.⁴⁴⁷ A similar approach was also used to explain the construction of the four-wheel cast-iron cannon. Here, in the *quantu*, cross-hatching and line shading have been used but not with the trained draughtsman's understanding (**Fig. 3.22**). As a result, instead of providing a three-dimensional effect and perspective, there are awkward patches of light and dark on the object instead.⁴⁴⁸

The Self Strengthening Movement began with a focus on technological innovation where the manufacture of machines would serve as the building blocks for industry. It took a militaristic direction, as the prevailing view was that the ability to manufacture armaments would enable the Qing state to break the monopoly of the West on warships and cannons. In addition to production of machines, the long-term plan was for regional arsenals to function as training grounds for engineers and to promote the translation and dissemination of scientific and technical texts.⁴⁴⁹

During the Self Strengthening Movement, the Jiangnan Arsenal and the Fuzhou Navy Yard were the largest and most prominent of these enterprises. The Jiangnan Arsenal was established in 1865 by Li Hongzhang, then governor of Jiangsu, and Ding Richang 丁日昌 (1823-82), the Shanghai Customs Intendent. Initially based in the Shanghai Foreign Concession in a machine shop—the largest in China—owned by Thomas Hunt and Company, the Arsenal had by 1867 moved just outside the Chinese city of Shanghai. By 1892, it occupied 32 buildings over 73 acres of land, with 1,974 workshops and a total of 2,982 workers; it possessed 1,037 sets of machinery and produced 47 kinds of machinery.⁴⁵⁰ The Fuzhou Navy

⁴⁴⁶ 澳門月報 (*juan* 51), 仿造戰船諸議 (*juan* 53), 火輪船圖說 (*juan* 54), 攻船水雷圖說, 用地雷法 (*juan* 58), 西洋遠鏡 (*juan* 60).

⁴⁴⁷ Wei Yuan, *juan* 54, pp. 7a-9b.

⁴⁴⁸ Wei Yuan, *juan* 55, pp. 27b-29a.

⁴⁴⁹ Elman, 2004, p. 292; Meng Yue, 'Hybrid Science versus Modernity: The Practice of the Jiangnan Arsenal, 1864-1897', *East Asian Science, Technology, and Medicine*, January 1999, pp. 13-52.

⁴⁵⁰ Elman, 2004, pp. 291, 294; Meng, pp. 29-30.

Yard was established by Zuo Zongtang 左宗棠 (1812-85) after the submission of a memorial in 1866, with the goal of building a modern Chinese flotilla by 1875. At its peak, it occupied 45 buildings on 118 acres and the shipyard alone employed 3,000 workers.⁴⁵¹

Because of their scale, these enterprises made their presence felt in the cities they were situated. Local residents followed their activities avidly and these were featured in the Chinese press and the growing body of pictures focused on modernity. The Jiangnan Arsenal was depicted as one of the wonders of Shanghai in the *Shenjiang Shengjing tu* and numerous pictures from the *DSZHB* highlighted the scale of these enterprises and their products, promoting the 'bigger, better' culture while China played catch-up with the West (see Fig. 2.32).⁴⁵² A visual culture of the Self-Strengthening Movement was generated not only from these depictions but also from the educational and publishing activities of these regional arsenals. Although this remains a largely unexplored area, it lies beyond the scope of thesis. It is discussed here only in the context of the institutionalization of technical drawing and how it contributes to the creation of new pictorial conventions and a new visual language that included descriptions for naval battles.

Both the arsenal and the navy yard established schools for teaching Western knowledge. In addition to geography, mathematics and languages, the curriculum also included mechanical drawing and design, naval architecture, and naval and land warfare.⁴⁵³ The wider public became familiar with technical drawings through publications like *The Peking Magazine* and *The Scientific and Industrial Magazine*. When compared with the illustration of the steamship in the *HGTZ*, the finesse in execution and orderly organization of the description of a safety boat in the October 1874 issue of *The Peking Magazine* demonstrates an awareness of what was required of a technical drawing (**Fig. 3.23**).

Catholic and Protestant missions through their publishing enterprises also helped to promote drawing as a vocational skill. In the mid-19th century, the French Jesuits opened two orphanages in Shanghai, first in Caijiawan and later in Tushanwan, Xujiahui, together with print shops that provided training for their charges as well as income for running the orphanages. Along with printing skills,

⁴⁵¹ Elman, 2004, p. 297.

⁴⁵² 'Shanghai Zhizao Zongju 上海製造總局' in *Shenjiang Shengjing tu*, 1884, *juan shang*, pp. 24-25

⁴⁵³ Elman, pp. 293-94, 297-99.

students were also in drawing and sketching.⁴⁵⁴ As Kao Mayching has noted, 'drawing reached China's educated class not as a curiosity but as something for practical application, contributing to the progress of China'.⁴⁵⁵ Drawing as an art (*tuhua* 圖畫) was promoted as a branch of Western technology—which the reformer Zhang Zhidong 張之洞 (1837-1909) referred to as *xiyi* 西藝 (lit. Western art)—along with disciplines like medicine, mineralogy, physics and mathematics. Drawing was regarded as being useful for drafting, cartography and illustration. In 1902, drawing was formally incorporated into the post-reform era school curriculum, extending its reach beyond the vocational mission schools and the specialist engineering schools.⁴⁵⁶

IV. Naval Action in the Sino-French War

With these foregoing contexts and visual lineages in mind, we return to the naval battles of the Sino-French War. France was pushed to shift the war from Tonkin nearer to China by the continued Qing refusal to honour their obligations in the Tianjin Accord and to apologize for the Bac Le ambush. Admiral Courbet was thus ordered to take his Far East Squadron to Fuzhou. The French Squadron saw action from August 1884 to April 1885, moving between the provinces of Fujian and Zhejiang along the China coast, in Taiwan and the Pescadores (Penghu Island 澎湖島) (see Map 2).

1. The Battle of Mawei

Courbet's instructions were to attack the Chinese fleet in Mawei 馬尾 and destroy the Fuzhou Navy Yard, one of the showpieces of the Self-Strengthening Movement.⁴⁵⁷ On 17 July, Courbet on *Volta*, his flagship for this engagement, and accompanied by three more warships *d'Estaing*, *Duguay Trouin* and *Villars*, began

⁴⁵⁴ Zhang Hongxing, 'Zhongguo zui zao de xiyang meishu yaolan'. *Dongnan Wenhua*, 1991:4, pp. 124-30.

⁴⁵⁵ Mayching Margaret Kao, 'China's Response to the West in Art: 1898-1937', PhD thesis, Stanford University, 1972, p. 63.

⁴⁵⁶ Kao, p. 62.

⁴⁵⁷ Thomazi, 1934, pp. 205-06. For an account from the perspective of court memorials, see Li Tianming, 'Zhongfa Mawei haizhan', *Gugong wenwu yuekan* 362, May 2013:30-37. Ironically, construction of the dockyard had begun in 1867 under the supervision of two officers on leave from the French Imperial Navy, Prosper Giquel (1835-86) and Paul d'Aiguebelle (see David Pong, 'Keeping the Foochow Navy Yard Afloat: Government Finance and China's Early Modern Defence Industry, 1866-75', *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 21, No. 1 (1987), p. 122-23.

the journey towards Fuzhou. Since neither side had declared war, the French ships were allowed to pass the forts that guarded the dockyard.⁴⁵⁸

After diplomatic negotiations had irretrievably broken down on 22 August, Courbet received instructions to commence hostilities. Notice of battle was given to He Jing 何璟, Governor-General of Fujian and Zhejiang, through a Catholic priest the next morning.⁴⁵⁹ Courbet had planned to deploy firepower against the Chinese fleet and timed the attack to take advantage of the swift tides of the Min in the early afternoon, when the Chinese ships would swing away presenting their vulnerable sterns towards the French.⁴⁶⁰ In Mawei, the Fujian fleet, under the command of imperial commissioner Zhang Peilun 張佩綸 (1848–1903), comprised 11 warships, nine of them built at the Fuzhou dockyards, led by the corvette *Yangwu* 揚武. Although this was not the hapless Water Force that the British encountered in the Opium Wars, the Chinese ships were made of wood and were at least nine years old. By comparison, all the French ships were armour-clad. The four cruisers that had initially accompanied Courbet were by now joined by the ironclad *Triomphante* and gunboats *Lynx*, *Aspic* and *Vipère*, as well as Torpedo boats nos 45 and 46 in the harbour. In terms of displacement tonnage as well as troop numbers, the French were superior to the Chinese.⁴⁶¹

The Chinese focused their energies on the *Volta* hoping to kill Courbet and his officers. Several French sailors were indeed injured or killed including *Volta*'s British pilot Thomas and Ravel, Courbet's aide-de-camp.⁴⁶² Shortly after, Chinese reports of Courbet's death began to circulate.⁴⁶³ This early success offered little consolation: practically all the Fuzhou fleet were sunk or set on fire by the French. The flagship *Yangwu* was grounded at the outset of battle within 'twenty seconds after the firing of the signal gun'.⁴⁶⁴ The despatch vessel *Fuxing* 福星 was crippled by a torpedo launch from the *Volta*, and boarded by a French prize crew. Shellfire set the *Fuxing* alight, she was subsequently abandoned and sank in the Min River. It took only a single shell from the *Triomphante* to blow up the other

⁴⁵⁸ Rawlinson, p. 112

⁴⁵⁹ Rawlinson, p. 118.

⁴⁶⁰ Loir, pp. 121-23.

⁴⁶¹ Ibid., pp. 117-19; Lung, p. 286; Rawlinson, p. 116.

⁴⁶² Lung, pp. 280-83; Rawlinson, pp. 116-9.

⁴⁶³ Rawlinson, p. 119.

⁴⁶⁴ James F. Roche and L.L. Cowen, *The French At Foochow*, Shanghai: Printed at the 'Celestial Empire' Office, 1884, p. 49.

gunboat *Zhenwei* 振威. The Fujian fleet had been annihilated by the time fighting ended at 5 p.m. By the reckoning of two American observers, 'the Chinese fleet ... was burnt and sunk within twelve minutes'.⁴⁶⁵ On 24 August, the French turned their attention landwards: heavy bombardment inflicted serious damage on the Fuzhou Navy Yard. From 25 to 27 August, Courbet began to lead his fleet down the Min River attacking Chinese batteries and shore defences along the way. On 26 August, the Qing government finally declared war on France.⁴⁶⁶

The Fujian fleet had been made to bear the brunt of the French attack on Mawei alone. The Nanyang fleet remained unscathed in Shanghai; Courbet had been told to bypass Shanghai for fear of alarming the international business community. Of the eleven ships belonging to the Fujian fleet anchored at Mawei, nine had been destroyed and about 3,000 casualties were estimated. By comparison, of the French vessels, only a torpedo boat and *La Galissonnière* suffered slight damage, and there were 10 dead and 48 injured reported.⁴⁶⁷

2. Keelung and the Pescadores

The French had already made their first moves in naval warfare on 5 August when Rear Admiral Sébastien Lespès, Courbet's deputy, bombarded the port of Keelung (Jilong 基隆) in northern Taiwan. A French expeditionary force came ashore intending to occupy Keelung as a bargaining chip for negotiating the Chinese withdrawal from Tonkin, but was forced off the next day by Liu Mingchuan's men.⁴⁶⁸ Wary of the French interest in the island, the Qing government had already dispatched Liu, a veteran commander from the Taiping Rebellion, as imperial commissioner for Taiwan in July.

After his success in Fuzhou, Courbet was ordered to Taiwan to provide assistance to the campaign there. He supported the troops on land through naval bombardment, and by throwing a blockade of the northern Formosan ports of Keelung and Tamsui (Danshui 淡水) and the southern ports of Taiwanfu 台灣府 (Tainan) and Takow 打狗 (Kaohsiung), that lasted from 23 October 1884 to 24

⁴⁶⁵ Roche and Cowen, p. 37.

⁴⁶⁶ Loir, 145–68; Lung Chang, 280–81.

⁴⁶⁷ Roche and Cowen, p. 25; Gideon Chen, *Tso Tsung T'ang: Pioneer Promoter of the Modern Dockyard and the Woollen Mill in China*, Peiping: Department of Economics, Yenching University, pp. 43–45.

⁴⁶⁸ Loir, pp. 80–89.

April 1885.⁴⁶⁹ Ultimately, the blockade only succeeded because the Chinese northern fleet, commanded by Li Hongzhang, denied help to the southern Chinese fleet during this conflict.⁴⁷⁰

As the French troops had only met with limited success on land, Courbet decided to turn his attention west, towards the Pescadores, the staging post where the Chinese had continued to receive reinforcements.⁴⁷¹ On 29 March, Courbet succeeded in destroying coastal defences around the Pescadores. Two days later, the French occupied Makung (Magong 馬公), the islands' principal port. These French victories came too late as a peace agreement was reached between France and China on 4 April. Courbet's squadron continued to occupy the Pescadores until July 1885 as surety for the Chinese withdrawal from Tonkin. By the end of May, there were 30 French warships anchored in Makung bay, making it the largest concentration of French sea power in East Asia in the history of the French navy. This proved to be Courbet's last victory: he became a victim of the cholera epidemic that swept through the French troops shortly after their arrival in Makung. On 11 June, Courbet died on board his flagship the *Bayard* and received a hero's burial in France to much media fanfare.⁴⁷²

The Fujian Fleet and the Navy Yard never recovered from the Battle of Mawei, and only continued to operate in a much-reduced capacity. Shipbuilding suffered as increasingly naval vessels were purchased overseas. The Sino-French War had exposed the weaknesses of regionalism, the lack of trained naval personnel and understanding of naval strategy. In the coming decade, the court's efforts to create a single command for a unified navy did not succeed. Li Hongzhang, ignoring the court's orders for a unified fleet, would focus his energies on building up the Beiyang fleet, making it the premier regional fleet.⁴⁷³

V *Shuizhan tu* of the Sino-French War

The visibility of war began to take on new dimensions after the Battle of Mawei. War came to be fought on different ground as the *realpolitik* of the era had shifted from land to sea, powered by Industrial Age innovations. Through close readings of naval prints from the Sino-French War, selected from the BN album, this

⁴⁶⁹ Rawlinson, p. 120; Loir, pp. 209-44.

⁴⁷⁰ Elleman, pp. 88-87.

⁴⁷¹ Loir, pp. 209-44.

⁴⁷² Loir, pp. 291-327.

⁴⁷³ Elman, 2004, pp. 315-18; Rawlinson, pp. 109-28.

section discusses how artists and illustrators interpreted these unfamiliar scenes and, as they usually worked with the assistance of standard pictorial conventions and formats, what their possible sources of visual information may have been.

1. Pre-Mawei: Battles in the Red River Delta

Several of the towns and citadels targeted by the French were located near rivers. While there were no notable conflicts that took place on water, it was an important means of transport, especially for the swift conveyance of troops. In fact, there is only one single print that from the album that directly references the *shuizhan tu*. *General Liu Overcomes—Complete Victory of a Water Battle* (*Liu tidu kefu shuizhan desheng quantu* 劉提督克復水戰得勝全圖) is dated to the second month of the *jiashen* year (March 1884), making it one of the earliest dates on prints in the BN album (**Fig. 3.24**, see also Fig. 2.9 for a similar dating).⁴⁷⁴

Although there is no illustrator's name found, the print mentions that it is a product of the Shenbaoguan (申報館); however, given its rough and ready appearance, it seems an unlikely provenance. At this point the Shenbaoguan were already known for its authoritative newspaper, and its owners the Major brothers also had a reputation for producing high-quality lithographic publications. It was also about a month away from the release of the *DSZHB*, where a stable of able illustrators, capable of illustrating in the new 'realist' style discussed in Chapter 2, were easily available. More likely, this was a small producer who hoped to pass his print off as one of geographical or situation maps that the *Shenbao* was providing for their readers during the early stages of the war.

Despite its quality, the print provides a wealth of detail for analysis. The river is shown in the foreground in relation to the shoreline where we can see Bac Ninh on the right and foot soldiers on the left conventionally marching over a hill suggesting that there are more to follow beyond the eye. It is a busy picture: undulating lines—thin to indicate the waves and thick to indicate the folds of the hills, cover most of the space. The soldiers and ships have been subsumed by this patterning, making it difficult for the viewer to discern exactly what type of

⁴⁷⁴ There is another print with a reference to *shuizhan tu* in its title in the Public Records Office at Kew (MPK441/123). Entitled *Kefu Beining Henei shuizhan Liu jun desheng xin tu* 克復北甯河內水戰劉軍得勝新圖, it claims to be published in Hong Kong by a newspaper bureau and to be a copper-plate print. (see Wagner, pp. 124-25, fig. 3.4).

military activities are going on. It is the subtitle and the captions that prove instructive.

According to the subtitle, General Liu's troops have buried mines and explosives inside the city of Bac Ninh (*Liujun Beining chengnei maifu dilei huopao* 劉軍北甯城內埋復[伏]火炮). Thus the main action really takes place on land. No actual battle on water is shown; but two structures, possibly wrecks, are accompanied by the caption 'the great explosion of the underwater mine' (*shuilei dapao* 水雷大炮), a reference after the fact. The French vessels though shown much smaller and inconsequential after Liu's fleet as described as ironclads (*Falanxi tiejia* 法蘭西鐵鉀). The ships themselves do not resemble any precise Western type but with their multi-decks and voluminous sails, they seem to be a cross between a galleon and a clipper, which were rarely seen by the late 19th century. The overall effect is almost like a sedate procession down the river rather than a hot pursuit, seen from an elevated viewpoint. Perhaps earlier prints of a format not unlike Breughel's painting in Figure 3.8 may have provided guidance.

2. The New Realism: Battle of Mawei

Notwithstanding the general unfamiliarity with naval imagery, the engagement at Fuzhou generated a flurry of pictures in China. It bears mentioning that while newspapers like the *Shenbao* were truthful about the Chinese defeat, all the imagery—even the pictures in the 'objective' *DSZHB* that did not try to hide the French military might—invariably depicted the Battle of Mawei as a Chinese victory.⁴⁷⁵ The differences between images lay in the nuances of inscription and the styles of representation.

We return once more to *The Battle of Mawei* print which opened this chapter and continue the reading of it with the contexts we have so far discussed in mind (Fig. 3.1). As can be surmised from the account of the battle, the French attack was so relentlessly swift that there was no time for the Chinese to get into line of battle formation once the first shots were fired. The meeting of the two navies as depicted is therefore a staged scene not unlike some of the examples discussed in Chapter 2 (see Fig. 2.22). The formal way in which the ships are lined up, with *Triomphante*, the largest ship in the French fleet (by tonnage, 4,585

⁴⁷⁵ Wagner, p. 151.

tons) facing the Chinese flagship *Yangwu*, is suggestive of a group photo taken with opposing sides before a game. The streams of fire emitting from the ships' cannons are almost lost in the dense patterning of the waves. The ships are generic depictions of 19th century warships and are only identifiable by name.

The perspectival rendition is reminiscent of earlier prints from Europe (see Figs. 3.9a and b; 3.10a and b), as is the fish-scale pattern of the waves. When compared with the scenes of *shuizhan tu* from Tonkin, the handling of space is more competent and a sense of depth can be detected. As observed by Laikwan Pang, along with the emergence of cartography as a Western science, the introduction of telescopes and these new or imaginary forms of transport 'demanded that the Chinese reconceptualised distance and space, which were often associated with military aggression'.⁴⁷⁶

There is an 18-line-long inscription extolling a Chinese victory but somewhere within this dense wordy space is a passing reference to the 'sacrifice' (*sheshen* 捨身) of *Yangwu*. The print bears the name of Meizhou Yinshi with the character *zhi* 製, implying that he was not only the calligrapher but the illustrator as well. As mentioned in Chapter 2, this is a name that has been found in prints from the Sino-French War as well as the Sino-Japanese War but his exact identity still cannot be ascertained.⁴⁷⁷ Although the print is silent on the place of manufacture, the rubric at the bottom left mentions that it is distributed through Yuquanxuan in Shanghai (*Shangyang Huayuan nei Yuquanxuan jipi* 上洋花園內玉泉軒寄).

Bearing an even closer resemblance and connection than the European prints to *The Battle of Mawei* is Wu Youru's illustration for the *DSZHB* entitled *The French Offensive on Majiang* (*Fa fan Majiang* 法犯馬江) (Fig. 3.25). As Wu's illustration appeared in the *yi* 1 (乙一) issue of the pictorial which was issued quite soon after the battle, in the period 31 August to 9 September 1884, I would suggest that it provided the template for *The Battle of Mawei*. The two prints—one lithograph and, the other, a woodblock—are practically identical, save for a section of the background which has been taken out and replaced with the title and inscription in *The Battle of Mawei*, and a simplification of the detail on the

⁴⁷⁶ Pang, 2005, p. 16.

⁴⁷⁷ Chapter 2, n. 102.

right hand side, perhaps done to facilitate woodblock printing. Wu's illustration as per the *DSZHB* agenda is more informative: it not only correctly places the French flagship *Volta* (*Fu'erde* 縛爾德) in a prominent position but also identifies smaller vessels like torpedo and transport boats. More significantly, in terms of establishing a graphic lineage, there are elements in *Fa fan Majiang* that one can identify with other works by Wu. For instance, similar groupings of ships can be seen in the backgrounds of the *DSZHB* illustration and an illustration of the Bund in the *Shenjiang Shengjing tu* (Fig. 3.26).

3. Looking for a Visual Language: Hunting Admiral Courbet

Realistic depictions in the style of Wu Youru's and Meizhou Yinshi's pictures did not automatically replace the extant modes of visual expression. These pictures offer a striking contrast to prints like *The Slaughter of Admiral Courbet* (see Fig. 2.18). The latter demonstrates that the illustrator is working within a Chinese idiom and using conventions that were common visual vocabulary in Chinese print and understanding the conduct of *shuizhan* in the most traditional sense.

The organization of the pictorial space has a relationship between the shore line and water that is similar to that seen in the *Pacification of Taiwan* series and the earliest known victory picture in the popular milieu (see Figs. 1.14a, 2.1a and b). All the French ships have been depicted as outdated paddle steamers that are reminiscent of pictures in the *HGTZ* (see Figs 3.21a and b). The most striking image of a Chinese ship is not a modern product of the Fuzhou Navy Yard but a massive war junk, tilted at an angle ready to spill out its passengers in the vein of a Zheng He treasure ship, or the vessels shown in the Taiwan series and the 19th century piracy scroll (Figs. 3.5 and 3.15).

At the heart of the picture is a vivid scene that shows the French admiral being speared by a Chinese brave on board the *Yangwu*, expressing that the essence of *shuizhan* was armed combat carried out in boats and on water. A similar orientation can be seen in the anti-piracy scrolls, especially the Todai example (Figs. 3.4a and b). Although the death of Courbet in Fuzhou was entirely fictitious, it was not an inaccurate reflection of Chinese intentions. The strategy of the Fujian fleet had been to hunt the *Volta* down and kill Courbet.

Although the composition is two-dimensional and made up of a melange ill-fitting motifs, there is a sense of activity and movement, that is absent from the

realistic pictures. There are hoards charging out to the shoreline; there are streams of fire emitting from fort and from ship, and there are bodies floating and bodies blasted into the air. It can perhaps be said that unlike the realistic pictures that had an intention to educate, prints such as this were meant to titillate.

4. The Yangwu: Persistent Icon or Adaptable Motif?

Ultimately vision could not be totally reformed and changes in the conduct of naval battles were adapted piecemeal into the illustrative repertoire. This process can be seen in the changing imagery of the *Yangwu* as it was negotiated through different media. Although the *Yangwu* was hit at the start of the Battle of Mawei, when it was depicted in print, she was always shown afloat as she had symbolic significance as a product of the Fuzhou Navy Yard and as a flagship of the Fujian Fleet (for example, see Figs. 3.25 and 2.18). Built in 1872, the *Yangwu* was widely photographed in her prime (Fig. 3.27a). Till today, a model of the *Yangwu* sits in the museum that occupies the site of the Yard.

At the time of the battle, the *Yangwu* was already considered outmoded, and one of the reasons thought to have contributed to French naval superiority was the absence of two armoured turret ships, *Dingyuan* 定遠 and *Zhenyuan* 鎮遠. They had been ordered from Germany and were expected in early 1884. Their addition to the Beiyang Fleet would have ensured certain victory for the Qing government in the event of a war. However, as war became imminent at the end of 1883, the French persuaded the Germans to delay delivery.⁴⁷⁸ As it happened, Li Hongzhang also withdrew his ships from the Sino-French War. As such, the presence of *Yangwu* in a victory picture, or rather its suggestion of that which was absent, gave these prints a certain poignance and wishful thinking.

In the wake of the Mawei battle, one of the best known photographs of the disaster was the wreck of the *Yangwu* (Fig. 3.27b). Coincidentally, depictions of Mawei, or events after that, were often shown with a sinking ship, not identified, signifying the rigours of naval battles with the implication that it was an enemy vessel. In *Battle of Changmen* (*Changmen jiebao* 長門捷報), the depiction of action in one of the batteries in Fuzhou, the sinking ship pictured with its French passengers, occupies central place in the picture, caught in the crossfire between the *Yangwu* on the right and the *Triomphante* on the left (Fig. 3.28). The

⁴⁷⁸ Lung Chang, pp. 180-94.

inscription, written by the Angry Gentleman of Guangdong (Guangdong Fenshizi 廣東忿士子), identifies the vessel as the *Volta*, the French flagship—yet another invocation of victory. In truth the French did not lose a single vessel. Although a sinking ship is a common motif in European naval depictions (see Figs. 3.9a and b), could photos of sinking wrecks like the *Yangwu* have been a more immediate trigger for the motif? It certainly becomes a persistent motif in subsequent conflicts and is discussed in Chapter Four in the context of seriality.

5. *The Caricature Style*

The Battle of Changmen is also distinctive for its vibrant colour (red, blue, yellow and green) and humorous depiction. The stream of cannon fire shooting from the *Triomphante* is slyly snake-like with a fang-baring head, positioned as if it is about to swallow up the entire arsenal in the far distance (Fig. 3.28a). A well-armed battery is shown with its roof exposed revealing the Qing officials in council ready for war; according to the captions, the fort and its walls are newly constructed. As if to emphasis its minted status and infallibility, a sign proclaims that this is a gold-label battery (*jinpai paotai* 金牌炮台) and painted bright yellow to literally reflect its golden status (Fig. 3.28b). The colour coding in association with the pictorial elements is almost child-like—red for the flames of fire, blue for water and yellow for gold—but it serves to intensify each of these elements. In particular, the scale-like pattern of the waves, each blue with a white outline appears to overwhelm not just the sinking *Volta* but all the other ships as well. Yet there is a sensitive understanding of distance and perspective: as the scene recedes into the far distance, the size of the scales is gradually reduced until they become shallow lines. The application of colour for such a busy picture would have required great skill, using several different blocks for registration and printing. As such, we should perhaps not see the child-like style of the print as the work of as inexpert craftsmen but as a thoughtful attempt at caricature.

The bright colours, humorous elements and the cartoonish style have a lot in common with the colourful Épinal popular prints produced in France during the 19th century. While these prints lack the academic accuracy of traditional maritime prints, they make up for it with their wealth of amusing detail and pops of colour. One could almost say they were the tabloid versions of the serious engravings. From the two Épinal examples illustrating the engagement at Fuzhou

in **Figures 3.29 and 3.30**, we can see that *Changmen* shares a similar palette. *Changmen* and the print in Fig. 3.29 both depict a scene of the foreign ships firing at the batteries, albeit seen from a different viewpoint. This is a common format in popular victory pictures and is also discussed in the next chapter. The other Épinal print depicts ships shown in a triangular formation that appear to be viewed from ground level and up close. Although uncoloured, similar format and cartoonish style can be seen in *Liu's Troops Defeat the French Navy*, a *shuizhan quantu*, in Figure 2.24.

VI Coda

The naval depictions were thus enabled by the changing understanding of drawing and illustration, and inspired by a range of imagery brought in through trade, and perhaps learnt from personal experience by the artist. It would continue to develop over the coming decades but, at the time of the Sino-French War, the artists/illustrators were still looking for the appropriate means of expression, through the modern language of technical drafting, through the existing vocabulary of Chinese illustration or the Western form of popular caricature.

Following the conclusion of the Sino-French War, inspections and show-of-power tours were undertaken by the imperial navy, in particular, the Beiyang Fleet, to reinforce the Qing empire's naval presence amongst its neighbours. The eventual arrival of the *Dingyuan* and *Zhenyuan* in October 1885 was met with enthusiastic popular response. The *Dingyuan* was depicted on a print celebrating a naval inspection conducted by the Seventh Prince (Yihuan, Prince Chun 奕譞, 醇親; 1840-91), Li Hongzhang and Admiral Shanqing 善慶 (1837-88) in 1886 (**Fig. 3.31**). As the title indicates, it shows the entourage arriving at Lushun (Port Arthur), and the print is attributed to the production centre of Yangjiabu (楊家埠) in the rural north.⁴⁷⁹

Here, the popular also intersected with the official. The Inspection of the Northern Coastal Defences was an important event, it was the first review held by the Navy Board after it was set up to oversee a unified Qing fleet with Prince Chun as its Chancellor in November 1885. The journey lasted 10 days and with eight battleships from both the Nanyang and the Beiyang fleets participating. In addition to witnessing naval manoeuvres, the Prince also visited various local dignitaries

⁴⁷⁹ In the collection of the British Museum. For attribution, see Flath, 2004, pp. 103-04, pl. 25.

and even held an audience with the French Admiral Reunier. The official painting commemorating the event is monumental, measuring 251 x 316 cm, likely meant to be a *tieluo* (**Fig. 3.32**). Instead of the popular version with a famous boat, the Prince is shown accurately in the *Haiyan* 海宴, a steamship belonging to the Nanyang fleet on which he made the journey. Although we do not know who the painter of the work is, there is a poetic inscription by Zhou Fu 周馥, the compiler of the official records of this visit (**Fig. 3.32b**).⁴⁸⁰ Remarkably, it is executed in a style that is associated with ship portraits in Chinese export painting; the faces of the Prince, Li and Shanqing are rendered by brush with a realism akin to photography, a technique that was popular with the Shanghai school painters (**Fig. 3.32a**). It marks out hitherto unexplored connections between the Qing court and the treaty ports.⁴⁸¹

A anecdote told by the the artist Jiang Danshu 姜丹書 (1885-1962) is perhaps instructive on the direction of maritime depictions as art in China. When the official examinations were abolished in 1905, they were replaced by exams that would accommodate students who had been sent overseas and educated at the new 'normal schools'. Art (*yishu* 藝術) was among the subjects tested. Jiang had been one of the rare students who had taken exams under this short-lived system. In addition to traditional ink painting, he was also examined on geometry, underscoring the practical applications of drawing previously discussed. Jiang's task for Western watercolour painting proves intriguing: he was asked to depict a scene of a battleship at sea, with the shore seen from a distance in mist and fog—in sum, a maritime painting based on accurate rendition of the vessel and an understanding of the atmospheric elements of the sea.⁴⁸²

⁴⁸⁰ Zhou Weiqiang, 'Xunyue Beiyang haifang tu', in *Sunfeng xiangsong: Yuancang Qingdai Haiyang shike tezhan*, exh. cat., Taipei: Guoli Gugong Bowyuan, 2013, pp. 117-19, cat. no. II-28.

⁴⁸¹ For a recent work that explores the connections in painting between Beijing and Canton in the 19th century, see Lai Yu-chih, 'Qing gong yu Guangdong waixiao huafeng de jiaohui: wuming kuan Haidong cejing tuce chutan', *Gugong wenwu yuekan* 363, June 2013:74-86.

⁴⁸² Jiang Danshu, 'Woguo wushi nian lai yishu jiaoyu zhongxin de yiye'. *Meishu Yanjiu* (1959:1), pp. 30-33.

CHAPTER FOUR

REPETITION, SERIALITY AND COMPARATIVE NATIONALISMS

Victory pictures continued to be produced in print over the Sino-Japanese War, the Boxer Uprising, and even into the 1911 Xinhai Revolution. During my early days of research, while building up the database for this thesis, I remember my surprise when I first came across three identical prints, depicting three different conflicts in three different countries, from three different collections. These were scenes depicting the naval bombardment of a coastal fort at Hung Hoa (Red River 紅河) in Annam, the Yalu River (鴨綠) and the Dagu Forts near Tianjin (天津大沽口) (**Figs. 4.1a,b,c**). Production of all three can be attributed to the Shanghai-Suzhou workshops. As I looked at more prints, I discovered more instances of repetition, not just entire prints, but also sections of them—used almost like a quotation—and some persistent motifs. What did this seriality of images mean? What can it tell us about the victory pictures as a cultural phenomenon in South China? What can it tell us about the practices and inclinations of those who made them and those who consumed them? These are some of the questions that are addressed here.

Prints from all three conflicts are discussed in this chapter, but it is the Sino-Japanese War and its transition to the Boxer Uprising, and China and Japan's comparative visual print cultures that form the core of the discussion. The portfolios holding 45 Chinese and 188 Japanese prints from the British Library provided a comprehensive starting point (16126.d). They were acquired between April and October 1895 from Dulau & Company, Foreign and English Booksellers of 37 Soho Square London.⁴⁸³ As it is often unclear in the Chinese prints whether the date mentioned is the date of the event or of print production, the British Library's record of this acquisition is helpful. It tells us that the lapse between the event and print production was short and there was a time-sensitive element to these prints. The prints from the Boxer Uprising are taken from small groupings in the collections of the British Museum (which entered the museum in 1948) and SOAS (provenance not known).

⁴⁸³ Personal communication, Beth McKillop, 25 April 2003.

I Patterns of War and Foreign Intervention

As shown in the previous two chapters, through the example of the Sino-French War, each of these conflicts was capable of engendering a vivid global visual culture that continues to provoke, stimulate and provide fresh insights on the late 19th century. However, because images generate multiple, lateral layers of meaning, as opposed to the direct linearity of words, it is not possible to provide a comprehensive account here. As such, the narrative offered in this section is focused in so far as it helps to assist in the analysis of the victory pictures. Nevertheless, these conflicts should not be viewed as isolated events but as part of China's negotiation with modernity and the rest of the world in the late 19th century. Continuity is an important aspect to understanding why pictures and motifs are repeated and the significance of their seriality. It enables us to think in terms of patterns, alignments, similarities and commonalities, and to establish a visual lineage. These factors in turn help to decode what seem to be obvious factual inaccuracies or pictorial oddities, especially in the transition from the Sino-Japanese War to the Boxer Rebellion. At the most fundamental, all three conflicts involved battles on land and on sea.

1. *Sino-Japanese War*

Although the first Western-style diplomatic treaty on the basis of reciprocity and equality that China had entered into was with Japan in September 1871, relations between the two were far from cordial.⁴⁸⁴ As East Asian nations on a similar trajectory, China and Japan eyed each other warily. Three months after the treaty was signed, a crew of shipwrecked Ryukuan sailors was murdered by aborigines near the southwestern tip of Taiwan. Japan's request for compensation was denied by the Qing government, on the grounds that the aborigines as 'unsubjugated savages' (*shengfan* 生番) lay outside their jurisdiction. In 1874, in retaliation for this refusal, Japan mounted a punitive expedition to invade Taiwan. On their first overseas deployment, the Japanese forces had succeeded in occupying the island and only withdrew when China agreed under British arbitration to pay an indemnity.⁴⁸⁵ This incident allowed Japan to later claim suzerainty over Ryukyu and encouraged their hawkish intents towards Korea. It marked Taiwan out as

⁴⁸⁴ Rowe, 2009, p. 226.

⁴⁸⁵ James Wheeler Davidson, *The Island of Formosa : Historical View from 1430 to 1900*, London and New York: Macmillan & Co., 1903, pp. 123, 145-46.

vulnerable to conquest — a key factor in the French decision to mount the Keelung Campaign in 1884.

Korea proved to be the real bone of contention in Qing and Meiji relations. Historically, Korea was a tributary of China. However, in the new world order it proved to be critical to the strategic concerns of both China and Japan. China saw Korea as a buffer to Japanese expansion in Manchuria; while Japan saw it as a staging post for a possible invasion of Russia, as well as a source for importing food and natural materials like coal and iron ore that were necessary for industrialization. From 1873 onwards, the Meiji government had considered the invasion of Korea, and had indulged in some instances of gunboat diplomacy that eventually led to the opening of three treaty ports.⁴⁸⁶

In the early 1880s, aggression on the part of Japan invited counteraction from China. Domestic politics revealed rifts between Chinese-backed conservatives and pro-Japan reformists, and provided grounds for intervention. In December, tensions escalated when a Chinese garrison, at the request of Queen Min (Empress Myeongseong 明成皇后; 1851-95), suppressed a coup led by the pro-Japanese faction. As an attempt to defuse these tensions, Li Hongzhang and Itō Hirobumi (伊藤 博文; 1841-1909) negotiated and signed an agreement in April 1885 (The Tianjin Convention) that saw the gradual withdrawal of both Chinese and Japanese armies from Korea. The ongoing dialogue between Li and Itō served to stave off outright war for another decade.⁴⁸⁷

The Donghak Rebellion in 1894 was the catalyst for sparking off the Sino-Japanese War. Like the Sino-French War, Chinese involvement began with a request for military assistance, in this case from King Gojong (Gojong Gwangmuje 高宗光武帝; 1852-1919), for putting down a revolt. The Chinese troops, a small force of 2,800 arrived in early June 1894. On the pretext that China had broken the terms of the 1885 Convention by not informing Japan, the latter sent an 8,000-strong expeditionary force.⁴⁸⁸ The first forces comprising approximately 4,000 soldiers

⁴⁸⁶ Rowe, 2009, p. 227.

⁴⁸⁷ Ibid, p. 228.

⁴⁸⁸ James L. McClain, *Japan: A Modern History*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co, 2002, p. 297. There are differing Chinese views. According to the Chinese, they had been encouraged to honour Korea's request and Japanese officials had indicated that they would not get involved in (see John King Fairbank and Kwang-Ching Liu, eds., *The Cambridge History of China: Late Ch'ing, 1800-1911. Volume 11, Part 2*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980, p. 105).

and 500 marines from Japan landed in Incheon by 12 June. After the suppression of the rebellion, Japan requested that China co-operate to reform the Korean government. As China refused, Japan also refused Korea's request to withdraw its troops.⁴⁸⁹ On 23 July, the Japanese entered Seoul, seized the king and occupied the Royal Palace. They replaced the existing government with members from the pro-Japanese faction. A new government, formed on July 25, repudiated Sino-Korean treaties and gave the Imperial Japanese Army the right to expel the Beiyang Army troops from Korea. China rejected the legitimacy of the new government. The stage for war was set.⁴⁹⁰

a. The Battle of Fengdao

As was the case with the Sino-French War, a regional army and navy, in this case, the Beiyang Army and Fleet, primarily fought the Sino-Japanese War. In July 1894, the Japanese forces outnumbered Chinese forces. After some vacillation, Li Hongzhang eventually decided to send more troops. On 16 July, 8,000 troops were landed from a convoy of rented steamers. A further convoy of transport ships under the protection of the three warships *Jiyuan* 濟遠, *Weiyuan* 威遠 and *Guangyi* 廣乙, arrived in Asan 牙山, discharging their troops on 24 July. Soon after, the convoy commander sent the *Weiyuan* back to China, and the *Jiyuan* and *Guangyi* out to sea. A further transport *Gaosheng* 高陞 (referred to in Western publications of the time as *Kowhsing*) protected by the *Caojiang* 操江 was still on its way.⁴⁹¹

Upon receiving intelligence of Chinese troop movements, the Japanese sent their 'Flying Squadron' of the *Akitsushima*, *Yoshino*, *Naniwa* and *Takikacho* to intercept them. As the Bay of Asan was the only route through which Chinese reinforcements could be sent, the Japanese intended to blockade Asan and then surround them with their land troops. On 25 July, the *Ji Yuan* and the *Guangyi* encountered the Flying Squadron.⁴⁹² What ensued came to be referred to as The Battle of Pungdo or Fengdao (豐島沖海戰). It was the first engagement of the Sino-Japanese War. The *Jiyuan* fled towards Port Arthur, apparently showing a white flag and a Japanese one, with the *Yoshino* in pursuit. The *Guangyi* beached and its

⁴⁸⁹ Rawlinson, p. 169.

⁴⁹⁰ Michael J. Seth, *A History of Korea: From Antiquity to the Present*, Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2010, p. 225.

⁴⁹¹ Rawlinson, p. 170.

⁴⁹² Ibid.

powder magazine exploded. The *Caojiang* was captured; the *Gaosheng* was fired on by the *Naniwa* and sank after a troop mutiny and the abandonment of ship. About 1,000 lives were lost in *Gaosheng* disaster, as many as would have been lost in a land battle.⁴⁹³

b. The Battles of Asan and Pyongyang

The new pro-Japanese Korean government commissioned the Japanese Imperial Army's First Army Corps to expel the Beiyang forces from Korean territory. Under the command of Ōshima Yoshimasa 大島 義昌 (1850-1926), 4,000 men marched from Seoul towards Asan. The Qing troops stationed at Seonghwa 成歙 nearby under the command of Nie Shicheng 聶士成 (1836-1900) tried to fortify their positions. Because of the losses at Fengdao, reinforcements did not arrive. On 28 July 1894, the Japanese attacked under the cover of night and the Chinese, unable to defend their positions, fled towards Asan leaving behind a considerable amount of weapons and supplies. The Japanese gave chase and Asan was taken by 3 p.m. the next day.⁴⁹⁴ The Chinese had lost the first land battle of the Sino-Japanese War. Following this defeat at the Battle of Asan, war was officially declared on 1 August 1894.

The remaining Qing troops headed north and occupied Pyongyang 平壤. By 4 August, reinforcements from the Beiyang Army had arrived, bolstering the Chinese presence to 13-15,000. They made ready for battle by shoring up the ancient city walls. Meanwhile, the Japanese First Army was in pursuit, picking up reinforcements in Busan and Wonsan along the way. The First Army converged on Pyongyang and on 15 September, under little cover, began their attack in the morning. Although the Chinese defences were initially strong, they were outmanoeuvred tactically by unexpected flanking attacks from the rear and suffered heavy casualties.⁴⁹⁵ By 4:30 pm, a white flag was raised by the Beiyang garrison in surrender. Pyongyang fell on the morning of 16 September.

⁴⁹³ As the *Gaosheng* was a British merchant vessel chartered by the Qing government, her sinking sparked off an international incident. Ships from Japan and other nations assisted in the rescue of the crew and some passengers, which was reported in newspapers globally. For example, reports in *The Times of London* from 2 August 1894-25 October 1894 reported on the sequence of events, and the numbers of the rescued and dead.

⁴⁹⁴ S.C.M. Paine, *The Sino-Japanese War of 1894-1895 : Perceptions, Power, and Primacy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003, pp. 158-60.

⁴⁹⁵ Chinese casualties numbered 2,000 dead and 4,000 injured. By comparison, the Japanese reported 102 dead, 433 wounded.

c. *The Battle of Yalu River*

The Japanese advance towards the Yalu River 鴨綠江 meant that the adversaries were headed for a naval showdown. The area was historically and politically sensitive as the river served as a natural boundary between China and Korea. In the wake of the defeat at Fengdao, Li Hongzhang had been unwilling to sacrifice more of the Beiyang Fleet, without commitments from the Navy Board for funding to acquire more arms. Together with Ding Ruchang, the admiral of the Fleet, Li worked out a strategy to defend China's coast between Weihaiwei and the mouth of the Yalu River. The waters between these two points would be policed with regular sallies by the fleet. However, this strategy left the Chinese troops at Asan without reinforcements and left the coasts of Korea open to Japanese landings. As Chinese losses mounted up on land, the Battle of Pyongyang had also brought a Japanese naval build-up in the Korean Sea. Li decided to send a convoy to the Yalu River; five steamers left Taku on 14 September, the start of a movement of ships that would culminate in the Battle of Yalu on 17 September.⁴⁹⁶

At Yalu, the Chinese fleet was larger with heavier guns. It also appeared to have the advantage of two battleships, *Dingyuan* and *Zhenyuan*, for which the Japanese had no counterparts. By comparison, the Japanese had a swifter fleet with quick-firing guns. Moreover, Japanese naval training had also kept pace with naval growth.⁴⁹⁷ When the Japanese began their advance, the Chinese struggled to get their ships in line and fire their guns. There was no agreement on the battle formation, no clear chain of command, poorly trained staff with low morale and a lack of ammunition. In all it was a total disaster for the Beiyang fleet, of the 14 boats that participated, 5 were sunk and 3, including the flagship *Dingyuan*, were damaged. Only four Japanese ships were damaged and none sunk.⁴⁹⁸ Although the victory gave the Japanese control of the Yellow Sea and was widely celebrated in Japan (see Fig. 4,22), the Chinese initially denied defeat of the Beiyang Fleet.

d. *Into Manchuria*

After retreating from Pyongyang, the Beiyang Army set up base in the walled town of Jiuliancheng 九連城 in Manchuria. With the support of around 23,000 troops, the army set out to fortify the town and its surrounding areas creating a network of

⁴⁹⁶ Rawlinson, pp. 171-5.

⁴⁹⁷ Ibid., pp. 168, 174.

⁴⁹⁸ Paine, pp. 179-189.

more than a hundred trenches and redoubts. On 24 October, the Japanese crossed the Yalu River and arrived in Qing territory undetected. They easily took Jiuliancheng and the garrison at Huqiu to its north the next day as the positions were found deserted. They continued their pursuit of the Beiyang Army northwards and, through the capture of Fenghuangcheng (30 October) and Xinyuan (15 November), the Japanese had secured all the land approaches to Port Arthur.⁴⁹⁹

Despite its importance, Port Arthur (Lushunkou) was not well defended and taken by 21 November with very little resistance. Located at the entrance of the Gulf of Bohai, the port controlled approaches to Beijing. It was also a naval base that had 'state of the art' facilities for ship maintenance. If Port Arthur was lost, the Beiyang Fleet, and indeed China, would lose all capability of repairing vessels damaged in combat. Earlier in the month, however, rather than risk another naval engagement, Li Hongzhang, ignoring court orders to take his ships out to shell the Japanese overland approach, had withdrawn the fleet to Weihaiwei, leaving it unprotected by sea. As the Japanese army marched in, the Qing troops left hastily. The international media reporting regarded the fall of Port Arthur as a turning point in the Sino-Japanese War as it had been thought impregnable.⁵⁰⁰

e. Endgame: The Fall of Weihaiwei

Ultimately, naval engagement could not be avoided. The Japanese laid siege to Weihaiwei 威海衛 by land and by sea. Designed with German assistance, the naval base at Weihaiwei was considered to be solidly defended from attack by sea. The defences consisted of a series of fortifications on land and on two islands in the bay, armed with Krupp and Armstrong cannons. Booms closed off the harbour to prevent attacks. Here, what was left of the Beiyang Fleet — 16 ships and 11 torpedo boats — sheltered. The Japanese campaign began on 18 January 1895 with the army landing east of Weihaiwei. The attack was planned to coincide with Chinese New Year and, as such, the army encountered little resistance. The Japanese attacked Weihaiwei by land on 30 January in severe winter conditions; the Chinese gave up, leaving the fortifications largely intact, after holding out for nine hours. Admiral Ding's plan to destroy the forts had been met by resistance. On 3 February,

⁴⁹⁹ Ibid., pp. 188-203; Rawlinson, pp. 186.

⁵⁰⁰ Ibid., pp. 197-213.

the Japanese turned the guns at the captured forts on the Beiyang ships. By 4 February, the Japanese navy could infiltrate the bay. An attack on 7 February severely damaged *Dingyuan* and sank three other vessels. A mutiny led by the crews of the remaining Chinese torpedo boats attempted to escape towards Yantai 煙台, but in total six were destroyed and the remaining seven were captured by the Japanese.⁵⁰¹

As Chinese defeat became imminent, Japanese Admiral Itō Sukeyuki 伊東 祐亨 1843-1914) made an appeal to Admiral Ding for a 'prudent, gentlemanly' surrender.⁵⁰² His response was to tell his friend 'I am thankful for the admiral's friendship, but I cannot forsake my duties to the Admiral state. The only thing now remaining for me to do is to die.' On 11 February, he committed suicide, with several other officers. On 12 February, the Chinese surrendered. With the exception of the *Guanggeng* 廣庚 that would bear the body of Ding away in state, the remaining ships were taken by the Japanese. The Beiyang Fleet was no more. Prince Gong ordered the Navy Board be abolished.⁵⁰³

f. The Taiwan Campaign

Although negotiations for peace had begun, the Japanese mounted on last campaign to occupy Taiwan as a bargaining chip for its cessation. On 23 March 1895, an expeditionary force attacked the Pescadores and occupied the main town of Makung. After the Treaty of Shimonoseki was signed on 17 April, ceding Taiwan to Japan, several Qing officials attempted to resolve cessation by declaring Taiwan's independence.⁵⁰⁴ On 23 May, Taiwan declared themselves a republic with the Qing Governor-General, Tang Jingsong 唐景崧, as its first president and Liu Yongfu, the commander of the Black Flags as head of the army. Their troops were made up of regular units, Black flags and local Hakka militia. The Japanese landed on 29 May and it would take them almost six months of skirmishes and guerrilla warfare before they could subdue the island and institute proper colonial administration.⁵⁰⁵

⁵⁰¹ Paine, pp. 222-35; Rawlinson, pp. 186-90.

⁵⁰² Rawlinson, p. 188-89.

⁵⁰³ Paine, pp. 222-35; Rawlinson, p. 190.

⁵⁰⁴ Davidson, pp. 266-68.

⁵⁰⁵ Davidson, pp. 280-364.

The peace talks were not without their drama. An attempted assassination on Li Hongzhang by an extremist patriot succeeded in wounding him. Because of the loss of face Japan suffered from this incident, an immediate ceasefire was agreed to. The Treaty of Shimonoseki ushered in an age of imperialism. Korea was declared an independent nation, a *de facto* Japanese protectorate. Taiwan was ceded and only intervention by Russia, France and Germany prevented the cessation of Port Arthur and Dalian to the Japanese. It also meant that an unspoken principle that the Qing empire itself was off limits to colonization had been broken. It set off the 'scramble for concessions' where China saw itself carved up like a watermelon (*guafen* 瓜分).⁵⁰⁶

2. Boxer Uprising

Although uprising was localized, it was made complicated by the Boxers' ambiguous relationship with the Qing court. There were factions that supported the movement believing that they could be useful in promoting anti-foreign sentiments. The generals that supported the Boxers included Nie Shicheng, a veteran of the Sino-Japanese War and Dong Fuxiang 董福祥 (1839-1908), who was in charge of the Muslim Gansu Braves (Ganjun 甘軍). Even as the Boxers became increasingly violent in early 1900, the Dowager Empress Cixi 慈禧太后 (1835-1908) ordered regional officials to tolerate rather than suppress them.⁵⁰⁷ The Boxers blamed the economic hardship and drought they were suffering on the foreign presence in China and exacted revenge through the slaughter of missionaries and Chinese Christians.

From Shandong, the movement spread in the countryside until it reached the outskirts of Beijing. In Tianjin, the Foreign Settlements were bombarded all rail communication was cut off. By June, the Boxers had entered the capital unleashing a wave of anarchy in the city. Concerned diplomats requested for military assistance from naval ships stationed in Tianjin. An allied international force from eight nations (Baguo Lianjun 八國聯軍) took the Dagou forts on 17 June and prepared to march for Beijing. The news prompted Cixi to try and expel the foreigners under the escort of the Qing army. Representatives from the legations met and all agreed not to leave. They began to consolidate their position and

⁵⁰⁶ Rowe, p. 234-36.

⁵⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 244.

shoring up their defences. On 21 June, Cixi authorized war on all foreign powers; the day before, the Qing army and the Boxers had already laid siege on the Legation Quarter.⁵⁰⁸

After taking the Dagou forts, the Allies were able to land more troops and Tianjin was secured on 14 July. An international force of about 20,000 men⁵⁰⁹ set out for Beijing. Resistance by Qing troops and Boxers were overcome at Beicang 北倉 and Yangcun 楊村. The Allies arrived in Beijing on 14 August. In the early hours of the next day, Cixi and the Guangxu emperor, disguised as peasants and under the protection of Gansu Braves, slipped away to Xi'an. The occupation of Beijing, Tianjin and several cities in north China lasted for more than a year. Beijing was looted and the Forbidden City was ransacked. The so-called 'peace agreement', the Boxer Protocol signed on 7 September 1901, saw China pay an indemnity of 450,000,000 taels of fine silver. Foreign troops would remain stationed in north China. The concept of national sovereignty was practically non-existent.⁵¹⁰

II Attitudes to Copying

That visual material could replicate, proliferate and circulate reveals that there was lack of exclusivity to the image, and also Chinese attitudes to material that would today be classified as 'intellectual property', and the act of copying. It differs from conventional perception that art, as a masterpiece has to have rarity and originality.⁵¹¹ One general explanation could be that the Chinese social system viewed civilization in terms of continuities, shared relationships and values, such that people at every level had much in common.⁵¹²

⁵⁰⁸ Kenneth G. Clark, 'The Boxer Uprising 1899-1900' (Russo-Japanese War Research Society, <http://www.russojapanesewar.com/boxers.html>, accessed 30 August 2013.)

⁵⁰⁹ 10,000 Japanese, 4,000 Russian, 3,000 British, 2,000 American, 800 French, 200 German, and about 100 Italians and Austrians.

⁵¹⁰ Rowe, pp. 244-46; Immanuel C. Y. Hsu, *The Rise of Modern China*, 6th edition, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2000, pp. 387-404 has been used as a basis for constructing this account.

⁵¹¹ The aura of 'uniqueness' which, according to Walter Benjamin, in Western art was taken away by technological reproduction, first by lithography and then by photography (Benjamin, pp. 4-12).

⁵¹² Historians of China have described this social system as one adhering to the Gramscian model of hegemony where 'the ruling class imposes a consensus, its dominion in the realm of ideas, by largely peaceful means' (George Rudé, *Ideology and Popular Protest*, New York: Pantheon, 1980, p. 23). See David Johnson, 'Communication, Class and Consciousness in Late Imperial China' in *Popular Culture in Late Imperial China*, edited by David Johnson, Andrew J. Nathan and Evelyn S. Rawski, Berkeley, 1985, p. 47; Li Xiaoti, 'Shangceng wenhua yu minjian wenhua: jianlun Zhongguoshi zai zhe fangmian de yanjiu', *Jindai Zhongguo shi yanjiu tongxun*, 1989:8, pp. 95-104; Francesca Bray, *Technology and Gender: Fabrics of Power in Late Imperial China*, Berkeley, Los Angeles & London: University of

When woodblock printing became commonplace in the Northern Song period (960-1127), it was not uncommon for connoisseurs to replicate their rare paintings (in one instance the *Admonitions* scroll) in print, and then use the copies for display.⁵¹³ The Northern Song court also mass-produced prints of paintings created by the imperial atelier, especially those with didactic and historical themes, for the purpose of educating young princelings and courtiers. More significantly, entire compositions, sections and motifs from paintings and murals, as well as calligraphed sutras, were printed for the wider dissemination of Buddhism.⁵¹⁴ As discussed in Chapter 1, similar transfers took place between painting, print and other media in the Qing imperial workshops.

Using illustrated fiction during the late imperial period as an example; Robert Hegel has noted that beyond depicting the narrative, 'pictures' represented the collective emotions and cultural values of its viewers over time and space.⁵¹⁵ Noting their repetitive nature, Hegel observed that the effect of such illustrations were 'to re-create by invocation rather than any mere representation the emotional power and even the moral significance of a human situation, to identify the viewer with the artist as he participated in the (re)creation of the human experience depicted or implicit in the picture'.⁵¹⁶ This sharing and commonality ensured that 'copying' and 'copies' did not have the same 'dark connotations'⁵¹⁷ that it did in the West. Even from an orthodox literati viewpoint, replication in both literary and artistic circles was in one sense seen as an interaction with the past that provided continuity in communication across time and space.

With typical disdain for matters of commerce, the model Confucian scholar exhibited a tolerance towards copying because it reflected his civility and understanding and was indication of the quality of his work.⁵¹⁸ In artistic terms,

California Press, 1997, p. 3; William P. Alford, *To Steal a Book is an Elegant Offense: Intellectual Property Law in Chinese Civilization*, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1995, pp. 9-29.

⁵¹³ Mi Fu describes this display in his *Huashi (History of Painting)* (Shih-shan Susan Huang, 'Media Transfer and Modular Construction: The Printing of *Lotus Sutra* Frontispieces in Song China', *Ars Orientalis* 41 [2011], pp. 137, 157 [f/n 12]).

⁵¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 137-41.

⁵¹⁵ Robert E. Hegel, *Reading Illustrated Fiction in Late Imperial China*, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998, pp. 317-22.

⁵¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 320.

⁵¹⁷ Wen Fong, 'The Problem of Forgeries in Chinese Painting', *Artibus Asiae* 25, no. 2/3 (1962), p. 99

⁵¹⁸ Alford, 1995, pp. 28-29; Christian Murck, 'Introduction', in *Artists and Traditions: Uses of the Past in Chinese Culture*, Princeton, NJ: The Art Museum, Princeton University and Princeton University Press, 1976.

the ability to create perfect copies was regarded as a matter of virtuosity and pride, the legal and ethical problems of an 'honest commercial transaction' did not enter into the equation.⁵¹⁹ It was an age-old accepted practice that Chinese visual arts were learnt through copying. There was an ambiguity to copying and reproduction; several terms existed to explain the relation of the copy to the original. They included *moben* 摹本 where a basic outline is traced from the original; *linben* 臨本 which not only sought to recapture the accuracy in appearance but also its original spirit; *fangben* 仿本 which was an original work based on the style of a famous master and *zaoben* 造本 where a forger created works based on historical accounts or legend without ever having seen an original.⁵²⁰

Some of these forms of copying like the *zaoben* seemed to have mercenary implications. This was especially so in the late imperial period, when commercial aspects of a burgeoning art market operated in an uneasy tandem with lofty Confucian ideals. Where the demand for artworks was great, a market in copies developed: copied works of the Qing imperial atelier were known as *houmen zao* 后門造, other areas which made a successful business out of copying were in Canton and in Suzhou. The Suzhou works, the so-called *Suzhou pian*, were created in workshops on an assembly line made up of skilled artists who focused on individual aspects of a work ranging from line drawing, colouring, duplication of signatures, colophon writing and seal carving. These workshops were located at Taohuawu 桃花塢 and Zhuanzhu Lane 專諸巷.⁵²¹ As discussed in Chapter 3, the Canton trade stimulated a vibrant practice in copying pictures, especially Western engravings. Taohuawu was known for its sheet-prints and *nianhua*. As centres for popular picture production, Suzhou and Canton are not surprisingly some of the locations that are connected with the sheet prints discussed in this dissertation.

There were different implications for copying from the perspective of woodblock printing. There was a downside to the medium's ability to produce direct or near direct copies rapidly: it became easier for publishers to reproduce earlier versions of books or pictures than to create new ones. Rather than commission original illustrations for freshly authored texts, cost-conscious

⁵¹⁹ Fong, 1962, pp. 99-100

⁵²⁰ Liao Bo, 'Gujin shuhua zuowei zhongzhong', *Jianshang jia*, 1998:7, pp. 72-73.

⁵²¹ Liao Bo, p. 74; Liu Jianlong, 'Shitan "Suzhou pian" de lailong qumai', *Jianshang jia*, 1998:7, pp. 56-59; Laing, 2000.

publishers often selected appropriate models from existing books. Illustrators for publishers worked from pattern books manipulating sets of conventions. As such, some scholars have noted that this stifled creativity and prevented the development of scientific drawing.⁵²² Similar inclinations can also be seen in the creation of these popular pictures.

III From Tonkin to Tianjin: Modules, Memes and Seriality

Even within the BN album itself, the same illustrations could be found depicting different events in the Sino-French War. If such prints, as some scholars have argued (see my discussion in Chapter 2), were intended for the purpose of reporting news, and by implication something that was fresh, why weren't new illustrations created for each incident by sheet-print producers as they were in other types of print media like the *DSZHB*? Further research into prints from the Sino-Japanese War and the Boxer Uprising revealed not only that entire compositions had been reused for depictions of subsequent conflicts, but that several motifs recurred, and sections of pictures seemed to be 'quoted' in others. At first sight, not all of these appropriations made sense, and as such, this section hopes to establish their meaning through exploring the phenomena of copies, media transfer, modular production and seriality. The prints are used here as primary sources and the conclusions and outcomes are derived directly from readings of them.

1. Tracing, Copying and Adapting

A monochrome print in **Figure 4.2**, entitled *The Great Battle at Fuzhou-Changmen: Kill the Wicked Soldiers, Capture the French Admiral Alive* (福州長門大戰殺賊兵生擒法將), depicts action at the battery Changmen during the Battle of Fuzhou. It is a busy scene with streams of smoke and fire from the exchanges between cannons on land and on the French ships, the *Villiers* (未拉) and the *Duguay Trouin* (路丁). To the right, *La Galissonnière* (格力松乃亞) is shown sinking, hit by Chinese cannon fire. Along the shoreline, the Black Flag Army are shown in pursuit of the French admiral, Courbet, who, accompanied by a flagbearer, rides on his piebald towards the picture's end into extinction (**Fig. 4.2a**). Meanwhile, General Liu, astride on his horse, holds the captured unnamed general aloft with one hand—a feat of acrobatic proportions (**Fig. 4.2b**). As with the other victory

⁵²² Bray, 2007, pp. 26, 69.

prints, the scene is entirely fictitious, Liu Yongfu was never at Fuzhou, *La Galissonnière* did not sink and no general was captured.

This *Fuzhou-Changmen* print is of a style similar to two prints discussed in Chapter 2 (see Figs. 2.18 and 2.19).⁵²³ The latter two examples were distinguished by their use of stamps that were applied later to orientate the viewers' understanding of the print both as subject as well as object. Here, except for an indiscernible printmaker's name written near the left margin, no such devices were used. Nevertheless, the intent of the picture is clear from its title. In fact, *Fuzhou-Changmen* is practically identical to *Zhenhai: Victory at Ningbo* (**Fig. 4.3**)⁵²⁴, except for the chunk of wall that has been replaced by script in the latter, and the names of people, ships and geographical locations. The dimensions vary by only 0.5 cm in paper length.

So which came first? *Fuzhou-Changmen* probably provided the template, not just because it was the earlier event chronologically, but also because its composition and narrative is more cohesive. However, rather than having the block re-cut for the later print, it seems likely from the way that *Zhenhai* has been edited, it was a new print done through a tracing. This can be seen in the perfunctory way in which the streams of gunfire and the parts of a hapless French soldier lodged in the debris have been left behind, when the wall and the bricks were taken out to make way for the block of text (**Figs. 4.2c and 4.3a**). Colour was added separately from a different block, and this resulted in the unfortunate effect of a floating blue coat (see 4.2a). Further down at the shoreline, the characters 'Changmen 長門' have been taken out leaving the generic characters for harbour (*haikou* 海口), similar minor textual corrections are found throughout the print. The block of text can barely be inserted into the space and as a result, some of the characters in the last line seem to have been shaved off (see Fig. 2.19, detail showing the inscription).

This practice of adapting a monochrome version of a print with the subsequent addition of colour becomes more obvious when Sino-French

⁵²³ There is another print of this style and with similar red stamps on the killing of Admiral Courbet entitled Liu's Troops Continue their Battles on Water—A Complete Victory Picture (劉軍水戰連捷得勝全圖). Here, Courbet is shown on his knees and on the point of execution. From the collection of the Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, MA (published in Elliot, 2002, p. 198, fig. 3.9).

⁵²⁴ For ease of viewing and making comparisons, the print is illustrated once more in this chapter.

compositions are reused for the Sino-Japanese War. For example, *Battle of Asan* (*Yasan jiebao* 牙山捷報) depicting a scene of direct combat between the troops of Ye Zichao and the Japanese Imperial Army is the exact copy of the *Battle of Langson* (*Liangshan jiebao* 諒山捷報) (**Figs 4.4 and 4.5**). The changes that needed to be made were simple. Only a single character in the title had to be substituted: *ya* 牙 for *liang* 諒. The event-specific inscription by Meizhou Yinshi was omitted. The flags were changed from the tricolore to the Japanese rising sun and the characters on the flags changed from Liu to Ye. Otherwise, everything else right down to very specific details like the number of bullets stacked on the ground remains the same. It is very likely that both were printed off the same block since the details that needed re-carving were minimal.⁵²⁵ Both prints have a kink in the frame near the top right and an uneven bit of line showing *feibai* 飛白 effect after that. The outlines in the *Asan* print also lack the sharpness of the earlier print, a sign consistent with the wear-and-tear seen in woodblocks over time. Here, the new colour blocks have been used to good effect especially in the elaboration of the smoke clouds making them appear denser. The colours of red, blue, yellow and green are, with few exceptions, the standard palette of victory pictures.

Both print and art historians rarely look at the rubric, but its format, the style the characters have been rendered in, and the information conveyed can be transformative in understanding how the original audience may have perceived the print and the possible intentions of the printmaker (see the details of both prints in **Fig. 4.6a**, left and right). The *Langson* inscription is clear and brief, mentioning its place of distribution in the old city of Shanghai at the Jade Spring Pavilion (Yuquanxuan) in the Yu Gardens (上洋花園內玉泉軒寄批). The calligraphy, while legible, is nondescript; resembling mundane everyday writing, it is often found on sheet prints for minor captions and unimportant information. The *Asan* rubric written some ten years later is more complex and intriguing. Even though it has not been clearly printed, another print from the British Library album with the same rubric allows us to figure out most of the text (see detail in Fig. 4.6a, centre).⁵²⁶ Here, the inscription (in Chinese characters) is laid out in four sections

⁵²⁵ Unfortunately it is hard to gauge from the measurements as the BN print has been trimmed, and the measurements may be inconsistent, but both are of the same length.

⁵²⁶ Entitled *The Recovery of Korea – A Victory Picture* (恢復朝鮮得勝捷圖), British Library 16126d4(43).

as follows: '1. x x [horizontal characters] 電報局石印 [vertical characters]; 2. 寄批在上洋城 [vertical characters] 內外 [horizontal characters]; 3. 金陵玉泉樓，春風得意樓 [double vertical lines]; 4. 格外克己 [vertical line]。' The *Asan* print was, according to this inscription, available both within and outside Shanghai: at the Yuquanlou (Jade Spring Tower) in Nanjing and the Chunfeng Deyi lou (Tower of the Proud Spring Breeze). If the Yuquanxuan and the Yuquanlou were the same entity, it suggests that the business had shifted location but the sphere of circulation had expanded.

The multi-lined, multi-level format for the *Asan* rubric is not common to Chinese sheet prints, but it is seen on Japanese prints especially from the Meiji period (1868-1912) onwards. These Japanese inscriptions (see the example in **Fig. 4.6b**) were found at the bottom corner of prints with information about the illustrators, printmakers and publishers, not unlike that on the *Asan* print. The first part of the *Asan* rubric translates as 'lithograph by x x telegraph bureau', with the blotted characters at the beginning likely to have been a place name, thus positioning this woodblock as the product of a more fashionable print technology. The reference to the telegraph bureau and a non-local destination not only exoticized an ordinary, everyday object but it also lent a sense of immediacy to a pictorial composition that was at least a decade old. As demonstrated in Chapter 2, such a manipulation of the audience's impression of the provenance and the nature of the print is not new, but I would like to argue that the printmakers were using ever more subtle and increasingly sophisticated means of suggestion.⁵²⁷ Here the connections to Japan are alluded to through the style of font and through language.

The *Asan* inscription is composed of characters that are rectangular and compressed; while they are reminiscent of clerical script calligraphy, the prominence of strong horizontal strokes that end with a triangular hook (known in Japanese as *uroko* 鱗) suggest that the designers of the print were emulating not writing but Japanese typeface font (see comparisons in **Fig. 4.6c**).⁵²⁸ Although electrotype was not unknown in China, its use was not widespread: it was first

⁵²⁷ In Figure 2.18, the woodblock was being passed off as a copper-plate engraving.

⁵²⁸ As noted by Martin Heijdra, the *uroko* is seen as one of the most important elements in establishing correct stroke proportions and visual balance. Martin J. Heijdra, 'The Development of Modern Typography in East Asia, 1850-2000'. *The East Asian Library Journal* 11, no. 2 (2004), p. 104.

introduced in 1859 but had remained largely within the domain of Western missionaries until the Japanese imported the technology in the 1870s and began to commercialize it, developing their own font types (see Fig. 4.6c). At the time of the Sino-Japanese War, Japanese-produced types were used in China primarily for new media like newspapers, books and magazines and had only been sold there from 1883.⁵²⁹ Visually, such a font would have been relatively unfamiliar and suggestive of Japan as well as modern print technology like lithography.

The last four characters *gewai keji* 格外克己 may be read as both a play on language and a sort of cipher. While the literal meaning of the phrase, ‘extreme self-denial’, has no relevance in the context of the print, a search of the *Shenbao* archives reveals that it was sometimes used in advertisements and notices colloquially to mean ‘extremely cheap’ in the sense of a good bargain—perhaps a reference to the cost of a sheet print or a woodblock printed (as opposed to lithographically produced) work.⁵³⁰ As the name of the artist would have appeared at the end of the inscription on a Japanese print, these four characters could also be read as the name of an imaginary artist: 克己 are the characters for Katsumi, a popular man’s name in Japan and together with 格外 may be transliterated as ‘Kakugai Katsumi’. Consumers of the Chinese sheet prints, especially in Shanghai, were likely to have had a passing knowledge of Japanese names and culture to make such an inference.⁵³¹ Could this have been another marketing ploy to give the print an authenticity of place and situation? Further analysis of such practices in the context of the print market is provided in the Epilogue.

It was inevitable that a complicated and groundbreaking picture like the *Battle of Mawei* (Fig. 3.1) would be worthy of reproduction. It follows the same process of transformation from monochrome to colour, and only the flags of the

⁵²⁹ Ibid., pp. 112-128. Its use eventually became widespread in China in the early 20th century, but it is interesting to note that Chinese publishers continued to be dependent on Japanese typeface until the 1950s.

⁵³⁰ I am grateful to Andrea Janku for her invaluable observations and help in the reading of this phrase. As Dr Janku notes (personal communication), the phrase was more common in the 1920s and the 1930s than in the pre-1900 period. According to *Lin Yutang’s Chinese-English Dictionary of Modern Usage* 林語堂當代漢英詞典, the term *keji* 克己 may be translated as cheap (see <http://humanum.arts.cuhk.edu.hk/Lexis/Lindict/>).

⁵³¹ For the circulation of Japanese cultural objects and goods in China, especially Shanghai, see Yu-chih Lai, ‘Surreptitious Appropriation: Ren Bonian (1840-1895) and Japanese Culture in Shanghai, 1842-1895’, PhD thesis, Yale University, 2005.

enemy necessitated changing (**Fig. 4.7**). In *Victory Picture of Naval Battle in Korea* (*Chaoxian shuizhan desheng jietu* 朝鮮水戰得勝捷圖) the recently invented colour of magenta has been added to the regular four-colour palette (Fig. 4.7b).⁵³² Sadly the use of colour has not enhanced but diminished the print. The layer of colour has made the patterning denser and much of the finely detailed line drawing has been obscured. Ultimately the function of the print was no longer to stimulate, inform or report. It does not refer to any specific battle, but the two fought in Korean waters, Fengdao and Yalu, were disasters. It was probably difficult to provide specifics on the names of ships as most of the aging Beiyang Fleet had been damaged or destroyed and the Japanese were still thought of in derogatory terms. Retaining only the name of Meizhou Yinshi, the news-like inscription and sensational title has been replaced by a short diatribe against the dwarfs (*wo* 倭) who dared to invade Korea and commit atrocities against the Chinese business community in Seoul (Fig. 4.7a). The haphazard calligraphy suggests it was produced in haste. There are two copies of this print in the British Library album suggest that weathered blocks were used as the lines have lost their crispness.

2. Media Transfer: Woodblock and Lithography, Books and Prints

The heyday of lithography in China coincided with the period of the wars and, by extrapolation, the flourishing of popular victory pictures. In Chapter 2, the section ‘Modernity and the Pictorial Turn’, explored the pictorial capabilities of the lithographic medium and the reasons why it found favour with local publishers and consumers. Previously, a pair of prints (Figs. 2.29 and 2.30) was discussed in the context of how woodblock printmakers adapted to the challenges of new print technology. This section focuses on a different aspect of the relationship between the two media. Using a book from the collection of the Shanghai Library and a print from the BN album, it explores how lithographers adapted pictures from different media and formats.

The Shanghai Library has a set of four books collected together in a case entitled *A Record of the War between Annam and France, an Imperial Victory* (*Anfa*

⁵³² Aniline dyes which were developed in Europe in the 1860s and were in used in East Asia by the late 1870s (Donald Keene, ‘Prints of the Sino-Japanese War, 1894-95’, in Shampei Okamoto, *Impressions of the Front: Woodcuts of the Sino-Japanese War, 1894-95*, exh. cat., Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1983, p. 7). As they were often used unadulterated in Chinese prints, especially from Shanghai, the colours —usually magenta, yellow and a sort of turquoise—had a harshness about them.

zhan ji, shengchao shengshi 安法戰紀, 聖朝盛事). Three volumes contain only texts, memorials and war dispatches, recounting events that took place in 1883 in Vietnam before China officially entered the war. The remaining volume is a pocket-sized (14.7 cm x 7.5 cm) book entitled *Pictures of the War between Annam and France* (*Huitu Yuefa zhan shu* 繪圖越法戰書) with illustrations and dispatches apparently from Liu Yongfu. The format reflects an increasing preference for portable and miniaturized books during the late 19th century.⁵³³ Published by a gentleman surnamed Wang in Shanghai and issued in May 1884 (4th month, 10th year of the Guangxu reign 光緒十年四月上海王氏印行), when interest in the war was reaching fever pitch in coastal areas and coinciding with the launch of the *DSZHB*.

The term *huitu*, which can be translated as ‘mapping’ is instructional as to how the viewer should regard these illustrations. According to the captions, the four pictures in *Huitu Yuefa zhanshu* depict the victorious battle at Paper Bridge (though 紙橋 here miswritten as 紫橋, lit. Purple Bridge), and the subsequent capture of prominent French officers in the spring of 1883. Each illustration is framed by a single thick, black line and, in accordance with the thread bound format of the book, was folded into half. As shown in the reconstruction in **Figures 4.8a and 4.8b**, the four pictures were originally two drawings. Figure 4.8a, comprising Scenes 1 and 2, is executed in close-up, as if viewed from the foreground. Spread over four pages, the narrative follows from right to left, ending in a climax where a Qing general engages in direct combat with a French officer. Scenes 3 and 4 are depicted in far distance as if the viewer is looking from the hills that surround the scenes. Here, the eye should follow the path of soldiers winding their way through the hilly paths carrying the caged prisoners, from left to right (**Fig. 4.8b**). But for the design of the book and to perhaps fit the narrative of victorious battle, the execution of the prisoners has been placed as the last scene. Stylistically, the woodblock medium dictates the emphasis on linearity. The lines serve to propel movement forward from right to left, as the attacking soldiers spill over from frame to frame, crossing bridge and mountain; they also allude to the horizontal format – not unlike that of the handscroll – of the original drawings.

⁵³³ Reed, p. 99. The *North China Herald* observed that books in this format were popular with students and civil examination candidates as they had no need for ‘broad margins and large type’ and ‘prefer to have books in portable boxes for travelling’. (25 May 1889:633)

From the BN album, there is an undated lithograph print entitled *General Liu Captures Commandant Rivière* (*Liu Tidu shengqin Liweili* 劉提督生擒李威利), the first in a set of four serial pictures (**Fig. 4.9**).⁵³⁴ Close examination reveals that the main components of the picture are the same as the four scenes from the *Huitu Yuefa zhanshu*. Scenes 3 (left) and 4 (right) have been placed on the top register of the picture, while scenes 1 (right) and 2 (left) can be found on the bottom register. The designer of the lithograph capitalized on inherent qualities of the original drawings as well as the graphic possibilities that the mechanized new media allowed. By placing the far distance scenes on top and the foreground scenes below, a sense of depth was created. At the heart of the print—the convergence point of the four scenes—a further articulation of landscape elements and the addition of a few gun barrels and sword tips seen over rockery provides continuity in the rendition of the marching army and also serves to knit the four woodblock book illustrations into one cohesive picture.

The title *Liu Tidu shengqin Liweili* is rendered in perfect clerical script (*lishu* 隸書). As a script that had been in popular use for documents before the invention of woodblock printing, its intrinsic form is tailored for rapid execution with a brush. Allowed here by the calligraphic possibilities of lithography, the wave-like flaring at the end of the diagonal strokes would have been challenging for a carver to emulate on woodblock. Unlike the book illustrations that would have played a secondary role to the texts, the primary function of the lithograph is its visuality. Thus, its composition also reflected lithography's affinity for description. Each of the four illustrations in *Huitu Yuefa zhanshu* had measured about 14.5 cm x 15 cm. These had to be reduced by about 50 per cent to fit the 26 cm x 33.5 cm paper the lithograph was printed on. Through the process of miniaturization, linearity gave way to descriptive detail, which had been enhanced by the addition of colour—a basic palette of red, blue, yellow, green and ink that was watered down to an inky grey.⁵³⁵ The sense of depth created

⁵³⁴ The other three scenes in the series include a visit by Peng Yulin to the front, and the land and sea battles that take place around Bac Ninh.

⁵³⁵ It is less clear in this specific example how colour was applied. The flat patches of colour resemble the effects of early chromolithography (*caise shiying* 彩色石印) or maybe stencilling. In most examples of lithographs that I have seen from the 1880s and 1890s, the colour is clearly hand applied. According to Reed, although stone-based chromolithography was invented around 1850 and was widely used in

from the arrangement of scenes gave the composition a more realistic rendition of landscape. The emphasis on detail in the compacted drawings contributed to the sense of melee experienced in close combat. The use of colour provides visual recognition and impact serving to distinguish between the Liu Yongfu's army in green and the French in their blue and red coats.

How then are the four book illustrations related to the lithograph? Apart from the similarity in scenes, there is an unmistakeable connection as the incorrect name of the bridge can be found on both. So which came first? The book is dated May 1884 while the lithograph is undated. I would argue that the lithograph came later, or was at least contemporaneous with the book. As neither have artist's names on them, it remains unclear if the original drawings may have provided the basis for both book and lithograph. However, the lithograph's appearance as an assemblage of visual modules, its serial picture format, and the way in which colour has been applied, suggest a later date for the lithograph, as serial pictures only became popular after the *DSZHB* had been published. It shows that lithographic pictures were not completely innovative but in some cases borrowed and adapted from existing visual paradigms.

3. Modular Production

It can be observed from the process of media transfer from woodblock to lithography that the illustrators were thinking of the picture less as a cohesive singular composition and more as an assembly of different units, an aggregation of signs, if you will, each with its own meaning. This modular approach is neither new nor specific to woodblock printing and illustration; as Lothar Ledderose has shown, it is historically intrinsic to a range of cultural and mass-production processes in China, from the system of script to the making of bronzes and ceramics and architecture.⁵³⁶ As Ledderose noted, these modules were like building blocks that could be employed in various permutations, in varying degrees of complexity.⁵³⁷ In the pictorial arts, using the example of religious set paintings (*taohua* 套畫) like *Ten Kings of Hell*, he observes that 'interchangeable formulas' were an important part of efficient workshop practice. In fact, the bureaucracies of

Europe until about 1900, the first recorded instance of its use in China was only in 1904 by Shanghai's Wenming Books (see Reed, pp. 28, 62, 312 ff. 152-54.)

⁵³⁶ See Lothar Ledderose, *Ten Thousand Things: Module and Mass Production in Chinese Art*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000.

⁵³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 16-18.

Hell, the subject of these paintings, were modular in its organization.⁵³⁸ Perhaps a similar analogy could be made for the conduct of war, with its martial discipline and strategic formulations.

Examples of formats and motifs have been already been discussed in this and the preceding chapters. Pictorial space is likely to have been conceived differently by an artist-illustrator who was observing from life or creating from his imagination and an artisan or block-cutter who was merely assembling a picture through marshalling a vocabulary of formulae, modules and motifs. When vision was mediated through the technology and not the eye, it sometimes seemed as if the compositional logic was lost and sometimes modules do not really work.

This is an effect that can be seen from a comparison of two Sino-Japanese War prints from the British Library. Each of these prints depicts two subjects, with *The Dwarf Slaves Occupy Seoul* (*Wonu zhanju Hanjing tu* 倭奴佔踞韓京圖) being the one they share in common. In *The Dwarf Slaves Occupy Seoul/Battle of Asan* (*Wonu zhanju Hanjing tu/Yashan dajie* 牙山大捷圖) the composition is a cohesive one with the narrative transiting smoothly from Asan to Seoul through the movement of soldiers divided by a central hilly ridge to indicate the passing of space and time. There is a balance in the use of static and active space, as shown by the warships looming in the distant bay, and the right to left concentration of movement in the foreground, as indicated by Chinese troops who are pursuing the Japanese into the Korean capital (**Fig. 4.10**). By comparison, *Victories by General Ye's troops on land and on sea/The Dwarf Slaves Occupy Seoul* (*Wonu zhanju Hanjing tu/Yejunmen shuilu lianjie tu* 葉軍門水陸連捷圖) appears disjointed (**Fig. 4.11**). This effect is probably because of the different second subject, which requires a simultaneous land and sea battle to be shown. While three-quarters of the picture resembles the one previously discussed, the top left quarter is a motif that can be found on other prints usually in the foreground, as seen in (**Fig. 4.12**). Here it appears out of place in the far distance as if randomly grafted on to the composition. Consequently, it looks as if the sinking warship is crashing into the walls of a fort, stricken down by a stream of cannon fire, and the boatload of angry braves is marooned upon a rock. All three are repetitive motifs that can be seen in victory pictures of all three wars.

⁵³⁸ Ibid., pp. 163-86.

4. Seriality

Two aspects of seriality are addressed in this section: from the visual perspective, through the reproduction of motifs and formats over time; and from a more abstract perspective, through the persistence of stereotypes and tropes. Within this framework, these prints are not only considered as a pictorial genre but also as social objects and commodities.

a. Formats

The unfamiliarity of the general 19th century Chinese audience with the possibility of using new media like photography to depict war and the lack of desire for mimetic representation ensured that visual material was could routinely be understood by the lowest common denominator through convention. For them, there was no sense of place or geography that would distinguish the Red River from the Yalu River. Repetition of format as exemplified by Figures 4.1a, 4.1b, 4.1c ensured that they were conventions of warfare of the period. From the Opium Wars to the Boxer Uprising, Chinese coastal defences, which became increasingly monumental, had to withstand increasingly severe bombardment by foreign gunboats. As it was an occurrence written into both the national and international rhetoric, a seriality of image could be detected (see Figs. 2.18, 2.19, 2.25, 3.16, 3.28, 3.29).

Underlying factors were also the practicalities of production and the economies of scale that had to be considered by printmakers. As these victory pictures were news related, they had to be produced quite quickly, while events were still being talked about in the public forums. Reusing existing blocks or copying from pictures to make new blocks saved on time and costs. These three prints benefit from having minimal text as the titles could be easily altered, as could the flags. In fact, even the flags in the *Dagu* print did not have to change; the Japanese had the largest contingent in the Allied troops. The inscription declares the great loss (*dabai* 大敗) suffered by the Japanese during an assault on Dagu by foreign troops. It is an interesting change of the emphasis from the 'great victory by our troops' (*wobing dasheng* 我兵大勝) seen in earlier prints. Although the *Red River* print mentions Meizhou Yinshi, none of them have the marks of printmakers or distributors. Thus, the lack of ownership to these prints also

made them open to copying. The existence of seriality to an image could therefore also have commercial implications.

b. Motifs and Memes

In Chapter 3, we briefly touched on the motif of the sinking ship in the context of the Sino-French War, tracing its possible origins to earlier European depictions of naval victory. As can be seen from the prints discussed in this section, the sinking ship continues to appear during the Sino-Japanese War with regularity (see, for example, Figs. 4.11 and 4.12). It is clearly understood as the sinking of an enemy ship, and in some versions, soldiers in foreign (Western) military uniform are seen falling into the sea. The Japanese, as will be shown later, used the sinking ship to stunning effect (see Fig. 4.22). While we cannot be sure exactly which victory picture the sinking-ship motif first appeared in, its circulation and spread is a phenomenon worth noting. Looking at these victory pictures as a cohesive body of material from our time in the 21st century—and not piecemeal as they came off the press like the original consumers—the ubiquitous presence of this motif suggests a process not unlike that of an image going viral today, only with different media and at a slower pace. It is in effect a meme—a contagious idea that is the touchstone of zeitgeist.⁵³⁹

Equally persistent as a meme through the three conflicts is the breaking of the ancient city wall (*chengqiang* 城牆). As shown in **Figures 4.13-16**, it is a pictorial format. Walls came tumbling down in Bac Ninh, Seoul and Tianjin among other places under a hail of cannon and gun fire from Chinese troops. It is always used in the context of driving out the enemies and taking back the city (*huifu* 恢復, *kefu* 克復). It seems a reckless move to blast away the barrier that was essentially the civic defence system for a city and defined its boundaries. But perhaps we can read into this a subtext of the changing times: the defensive purposes of the city wall had become increasingly irrelevant in China by the late the late 19th century as urban space became oriented towards commerce, time was not lived by the opening and closing of the city gates but by the 24 hour cycle determined by the

⁵³⁹ A term invented by Richard Dawkins as a counterpart to ‘gene’, to explain how natural selection could apply to ideas in the sense that they could work or fail depending on the environment in which they were sited. As such, it denotes a unit of cultural transmission (Richard Dawkins, *The Selfish Gene*, 1976). For a summary of the phenomenon, see Sam Leith, ‘What does it all meme?’, *FTWeekend*, 15/16 October 2011.

clock. For the consumers and creators of these prints, mostly in Shanghai and large towns in South China, the city wall was in fact an impediment, an irrelevance.

c. Heroes and Renegades, Dwarfs and Savages

In the mainstream Chinese narrative of the Sino-Japanese War, Japan's invasion of Taiwan and the latter's declaration of independence was a side show amidst the treaty negotiations. However, it received a different response along coastal and insular South China, perhaps because of its history of raids by the 'Japanese' *wokou* and, as discussed in Chapter One, of the way Taiwan was lodged in the Qing imagination (see Figs. 3.3 and 3.4). For the febrile public imagination, the war was parlayed into a struggle between dwarfs (*wonu*) and savages (*shengfan*), based on existing literary tropes and cultural stereotypes (see Figs. 4.17 and 4.18). Within Taiwan itself, rumours and incredible stories abounded.⁵⁴⁰ The presence of Liu Yongfu and his Black Flag army gave opportunities for stories from the Sino-French War to be expanded upon in popular culture.⁵⁴¹ It was in these circumstances that the Liu family made a return to sheet prints.

The Chinese prints in the British Library albums show that while most of the battles in the war proper were depicted in a formulaic way, those relating to the narrative of Liu's exploits were largely original. Wenyizhai 文藝齋, the printmakers based in both Shanghai and Suzhou, produced a series with the *shengfan* playing a prominent role. Liu's daughter, who was last seen fighting in Sontay (Fig. 2.11a) against the French, is now confronting the Japanese (劉小姐與倭奴對陣圖, **Fig. 4.17**). In this Wenyizhai print, she is shown commanding an army of female warriors, and aided by the *shengfan*. According to the inscription, news was received about the victory she achieved against the Japanese. Painted with the new aniline-based colours, the lurid red coats of the Japanese soldiers as well as the blue- and khaki-skinned *shengfan* draw the viewers into the print. With their primitive spears and shields and their unclothed state, the *shengfan* and the Japanese soldiers are on opposite ends of a 'civilization' spectrum and it makes for a compelling tale.

⁵⁴⁰ Davidson, pp. 348-49.

⁵⁴¹ For example Zhenliuzhai zhuren, *Liu da jiangjun Taizhan shiji* 劉大將軍台戰實記, 1898, n.p.

Another popular subject was the capture of Admiral Kabayama Sukenori (樺山資紀, 1837-1922), the leader of the invasion force, an interpretation of the capitulation scene in the victory narrative (**Fig. 4.18**). I have found three versions of this scene but all refer to the same story—said to have been related through letters received from Xiamen merchants. According to the account, Liu has captured Kabayama and has received a request from Japanese to exchange him for five million gold pieces (*wubaiwan jing* 五百萬金); Liu refused the ransom and has given an order for the decapitation of his Japanese prisoners. The version illustrated here is produced by Wenyizhai. It has an equivalent in colour produced by Wutaiyuan 吳太元, now in the Shanghai Library.⁵⁴² A version without a printmaker's mark but with a more extensive inscription and the name of the illustrator Ai Lianzi 愛蓮子 who claimed to have drawn the scene as a war observer in Taiwan.⁵⁴³ As with all prints, there are multiple references in the *Wenyizhai* print to previous history. Liu is referred to as the Long Victorious General (*changsheng jiang jun* 長勝將軍), a pun on the name of the Ever Victorious Army (*changsheng jun* 常勝軍) that he fought against in a pro-Taiping militia. Here the Admiral is shown kneeling before Liu and his aides. The *shengfan* are portrayed stereotypically, covered only in loincloths, with hairy arms and legs, curly hair, earrings and pointed ears. Other Japanese prisoners are led in by the *shengfan* in cages or in chains, treated like animals despite their civility of dress and led by savages who are in control despite their almost non-human appearance.

The understanding that the hero, who is a renegade general with their unconventional followers, is a trope can help us to decode prints from the Boxer Uprising that may seem incorrect and puzzling. Several of the prints that I have seen are in fact adaptations of the Liu Yongfu stories. For example, a print depicting Miss Liu with her female army and the *shengfan* is reinterpreted as a mystical episode from the *Battle of Yangcun*.⁵⁴⁴ While not an exact copy, a similar transformation can be seen in the capitulation scene from *The Battle of Yangcun* (楊村大戰, **Fig. 4.19**). According to the inscription, a group of 5,000 Boxers faced off an army of Japanese led by a Western general, from which they emerged

⁵⁴² Shanghai Tushuguan, 2000, cat. no. 86.

⁵⁴³ Davidson, insert between pp. 348 and 8.

⁵⁴⁴ For the Miss Liu print, see *ibid.*; for the Battle of Yangcun print, see Elliot, 2002, p. 168.

victorious. As the Japanese had the most soldiers in the Allied army, it was convenient for them to remain as the enemy. Here they are brought before a triumvirate consisting of the generals Dong Fuxiang, Song Qing 宋庆 and Ma Anliang 馬安良. Of the three, only Song was present at Yangcun; the other two are generals in the mode of Liu Yongfu. Dong and Ma had both taken part in the Dungan revolt (1862-77) but changed sides to enter the Qing army.⁵⁴⁵ Dong was notable as the leader of the Muslim Gansu Braves, a troop not unlike the Black Flags. As part of the Guards Army (Wuweijun 武衛軍), they had played a prominent role in the defense of Beijing. The *shengfan* were used to depict the Boxers. This may not be as surprising as it looks as there was, and still is, little understanding of what a Boxer really looked like.⁵⁴⁶ As the Boxers were a localized uprising in the north, the Shanghai imagination could only think of them as the alternative 'other'—rural, mystical and strange. Thus through the notion of seriality, we are made aware of the visual meaning of the prints and the contexts in which they are set.

IV Spectres of Comparison from the Sino-Japanese War

It would not be possible for any study on Chinese prints of the Sino-Japanese War to exclude references to their Japanese counterparts. If the discrepancy in numbers in the British Library portfolios is anything to go by, Japanese output far exceeded the Chinese—in any case, the Japanese triptychs were a literal victory picture! While there are no statistics for Chinese production, it has been estimated that more than 3,000 Japanese depictions were made during the war, about ten new prints coming out everyday.⁵⁴⁷

While the discussion in the preceding chapters had positioned the victory picture in the contexts of the Qing court, the 'imagined communities' of the emerging global mass media and the maritime trade, the comparative approach vis-à-vis Japan offers a different type of visual experience. It can perhaps be described as a phenomenon akin to looking through an inverted telescope, where a person sees the notions instilled by his own culture adapted by another for a

⁵⁴⁵ Wright, 1957, p. 121.

⁵⁴⁶ In a lecture on the visual culture of the Boxer Rebellion, Peter Perdue makes the point that what we conceive of as Boxers today was largely derived from photographs made by Westerners who had little idea how to distinguish between the Qing army and the Boxers (see <http://video.mit.edu/watch/mit-visualizing-cultures-visualizing-the-boxer-uprising-10054/>).

⁵⁴⁷ Keene in Okamoto, 1983, p. 17.

completely different, often opposing, function. The noted commentator on issues of nationalism and identity Benedict Anderson has called this 'spectres of comparison'. According to Anderson, such a frame of reference becomes possible when institutions and social practices become visible and people began to understand the world as one, there comes a new sense of the 'world' and the idea of simultaneous events co-ordinated within a single time-frame. From the viewpoint of collective subjectivities, a sort of 'unbound'⁵⁴⁸ seriality that has its origins in the print market and representations of popular performance is generated.⁵⁴⁹

1. The Cautious Observer: Pre Sino-Japanese War

In the mid-19th century, China and Japan were faced with the crisis of change and both responded to the challenge of modernity in very different ways. As a measure of Japan's initial isolation, the first reports of the Chinese defeats in the First Opium War were only received in 1840, brought by a Dutch vessel that had arrived in Nagasaki. The news was greeted with some alarm and many in the Tokugawa shogunate took it as a warning to Japan. There was both disbelief and fascination about the 'black ships' as a steam-powered warship would not be seen in Japan until Perry's arrival in 1853. Commentaries about the Opium War circulated within scholar-samurai circles, where some had interests in issues of coastal defence and military technology.⁵⁵⁰ Texts from China were well-received and Wei Yuan's *Shengwu ji* 聖武記 (*Seibuki saiyo*) on the Qing military system and *Haiguo tuzhi* (*Kaikoku zushi*) were influential. The earliest Japanese editions of the *HGTZ* appeared in 1854, a year after Perry sailed into Edo Bay, and further translations and edited versions continued to be produced until the early Meiji period.⁵⁵¹

For Mineta Fūkō (1817–83), a low-ranking samurai, the curiosity inspired by this new knowledge translated into a highly imaginative interpretation of the First Opium War entitled *New Stories from Overseas* (*Kagai Shinwa* and *Kagai*

⁵⁴⁸ In the sense that serial development is not finite or constrained by authority (Benedict Anderson, *The Spectre of Comparisons: Nationalism, Southeast Asia, and the World*, London and New York: Verso, 1998, p. 29).

⁵⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 29-35.

⁵⁵⁰ John W. Dower, 'The Opium War in Japanese Eyes: An Illustrated 1849 "Story from Overseas"', *MIT Visualizing Cultures* (accessed, 30 July 2013, http://ocw.mit.edu/ans7870/21f/21f.027/opium_wars_japan/oje_essay01.html)

⁵⁵¹ Hummel, p. 851; Masao Miyoshi, *As We Saw Them: The First Japanese Embassy to the United States (1860)*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1979, pp. 80-81.

Shinwa Shūi 海外新話) written in the style of the epic war chronicles (*gunki monogatari*). Published in 1849, it was illustrated with thirty woodcuts depicting the war that has no parallel in China (see Fig. 2.1a). Although *New Stories* had a very limited circulation—only 200 copies were made—it was published without permission; Mineta was imprisoned for two years and the unknown illustrator, who was also arrested, died in prison. As Mineta relies primarily on Chinese sources, it is an account that celebrates a Qing victory declaring the sinking of 9 warships, including 2 steamers. Nevertheless, *Kagai Shinwa* had larger concerns and the account, as well as the illustrations show an awareness of maritime technology and culture that was largely derived from Dutch sources.⁵⁵² This is reflected in ‘Fireboats approaching a British warship’ (Fig. 4.20): although it is a scene depicting a traditional Chinese strategy for *shuizhan*, it has a depth, dimension and accuracy that is lacking in Chinese illustrations of the same period (see Figs. 3.15, 3.17, 3.20).

Conscious of China’s experience, pragmatists felt that the way to avoid humiliation was to adopt Western ways to resist the West. The Tokugawa shogunate opened Japan to foreign trade through a series of treaties with various Western nations between 1853 and 1858. So, by 1860, while Japan was sending its first diplomatic mission to the West, British troops were marching towards Beijing in a punitive campaign that left the Imperial Summer Palace smouldering. Fukuzawa Yukichi (福澤 諭吉, 1835-1901), who had been a young member of the 1860 delegation to the States translated his experience into a series *Seiyō Jijō* 西洋事情 (*Conditions in the West*), an instructional illustrated guide on Western manners and objects. It became a bestseller that spawned other copycat guides.⁵⁵³

By the 1880s, the nature of Japanese engagement with the West was no longer so superficial. In the face of growing imperialism, the idea ‘the strong will eat up the weak’ permeated through Japanese society, articulated through popular songs, in government and in intellectual writing. As the Sino-French War drew to a close in 1885, Fukuzawa proposed the concept of ‘throwing off Asia’ (*datsu-a ron* 脱亜論) in an eponymous essay. He took the view that in order for a nation to survive in the modern age it had to discard its old customs and acquire Western

⁵⁵² Dower, ‘Opium War’.

⁵⁵³ Fukuzawa Yukichi, *Seiyō Jijō*, Tokyo: Shōkodō, 1866. Julia Meech-Pekarik, *The World of the Meiji Print: Impressions of a New Civilization*, New York and Tokyo: Weatherhill, 1986, pp. 64-72.

civilization, and because China and Korea had not put themselves on this path to enlightenment, Japan was justified in casting off its historical allegiances and deal with them in the same way as other 'civilized' countries.⁵⁵⁴ The continued wariness of events in China can be seen in *Story from the Sino-French War* (*Shinfutsu senso-ki* 清佛戦争記), a woodblock print depicting the battle at Fuzhou (**Fig. 4.21**). Here the menacing presence of the 'black ship' is writ large as it oversees the duelling troops. The inscription totes up the Chinese losses rather than extol Chinese victory as the *Kagai Shinwa* did. Designed by Utagawa Kunisada III, a printmaker known for his illustrations of the theatre, the way in which swirls of landscape meet the cresting waves has the feel of a dramatic backdrop. While the close-up view of duelling boat-to-boat combat resembles a performance, it is also a formulaic manner of fighting seen in the *Wokou tujuan* (see Fig. 3.4b). The forward-thrusting sense of movement in this print stands in stark contrast to the distant and majestic stillness of the Chinese *Battle of Mawei* (see Fig. 3.1). War with China was at this point still largely a product of the imagination.

2. Banzai: Victory in Korea and China

The excitement created by the war brought on a short-term flourishing for the dying woodblock print. Like China, Japan had experienced a print revolution and had embraced lithography and the pictorial magazine. In 1862, Charles Wirgman who had been a correspondent in both countries for *Illustrated London News* founded *Japan Punch*, the nation's first European-language magazine. As indicated by its name, it was modelled upon its English namesake. There were its Japanese language imitators: the first issue of *Marumaru chimbun* rolled off the presses in 1877 and would continue production for another thirty years.⁵⁵⁵ Many woodblock artists became illustrators. One of the most prominent war artists was Kobayashi Kiyoshika (小林 清親, 1847-1915) who worked for *Marumaru Chimbun*. His career followed a trajectory similar to Wu Youru's. He returned to making prints during the war and his output was phenomenal considering the short duration of the war.

⁵⁵⁴ John W. Dower, 'Casting off Asia I', *MIT Visualizing Cultures* (accessed 30 July 2013, http://ocw.mit.edu/ans7870/21f/21f.027/throwing_off_asia_01/toa_essay03.html)

⁵⁵⁵ Meech-Pekarik, pp. 179-85.

He produced 80 triptychs and several hundred single-sheet comic prints for six publishers.⁵⁵⁶

There is a graphic intensity to Kiyoshika's work as if he is exploring the effect of light as seen through the night with the modern searchlights used in the war (see Fig. 4.23), through the wintry landscape and over, even under, water (see Fig. 4.22). Perhaps it was his training as a satirist, but there is often an element of the comic and the subversive in these war prints. While most Japanese depictions of the sinking ships were not dissimilar to the Chinese sinking ship motif, only elaborated versions with realistic details and the special effects of smoke and fire, Kiyoshika has upended the convention. In *'Our Naval Forces in the Yellow Sea Firing at and Sinking Chinese Warships'*, a scene from the Battle of Yalu River, the sinking *Zhiyuan* is the main story and not a background detail as sinking ships often were (**Fig. 4.22**). She is shown crashing through the waters going down stern side up, with its mast breaking as it touches the bottom of the sea. Tiny figures of sailors are shown suspended in mid-water or breaking the surface of the ocean. The ongoing battle serves only as background.

In the early to mid-19th century, the steam-powered Western warships had been ominously referred to as the 'Black Ships'. Half a century later, the modern Imperial Japanese Navy fleet gave a very different impression. They are always depicted in startling white giving the impression of sleekness and swiftness next to their lumbering dark-coloured adversaries. As East Asia came continuously under threat, competitive show-of-power displays were not uncommon. The tour that the Beiyang fleet had taken in 1886 (see Fig. 3.32) had included a stop in the port of Nagasaki. There a diplomatic incident occurred as rowdy sailors from the *Zhenyuan* had rioted killing five policemen. In 1891, the Beiyang fleet made another tour to Japan. Through these displays and the Nagasaki incident, the Japanese public became familiar with the Chinese warships. At this time, there was still the impression that the Chinese fleet was still superior to the Japanese navy. In the run-up to war, Japan's naval and land

⁵⁵⁶ Ibid, p. 201. See also Henry D. Smith II, *Kiyochika: Artist of Meiji Japan*, exh. cat., Santa Barbara, CA: Santa Barbara Museum of Art, 1998.

forces held similar manoeuvres, presided over by members of the Imperial family. Several of these were commemorated in print.⁵⁵⁷

The *Zhenyuan* returned to Japan at the end of 1894 to a different reception. It was among the ships captured at the Battle of Weihaiwei and was opened for public viewing as this print by Ogata Gekkō indicates (**Fig. 4.23**).⁵⁵⁸ The ship is not shown in its entirety but only as angled view with the crowded deck. The emphasis is no longer on the *Zhenyuan*'s monumentality or its existence as the pride of the Beiyang fleet. Although this public viewing remained a sort of spectacle, its intention was very different from her previous arrivals in Japan. While the Japanese troops were hard at war, the prosperous life continued. As declared by the Meiji Emperor, Japan's vision would be to 'Enrich the Country, Strengthen the Army' (Fukoku kyōhei 富國強兵), ironically a saying from the Warring States period.⁵⁵⁹

While these prints were timely, they made allusions both to modernity as well as the theatrical tradition. The rays of the searchlight shining on the fleeing Qing troops in *Our Army's Great Victory at the Night Battle of Pyongyang* Japan by Kobayashi Toshimitsu are reminiscent of a theatrical spotlight. Unlike the Chinese prints, arduous nature of war was made evident to the Japanese audience. In a Chinese print of the same event, the only indicator it is night is the title *Night Battle at Pyongyang* (Pingrang yezhan 平壤夜戰) and the addition of the crescent moon, otherwise the battle scene is uninspiring and formulaic (**Fig. 4.24**).

In a short space of fifty years, China and Japan each experienced a rapid shift of imagery vis-à-vis the other. In Japanese eyes the Chinese changed from the thoughtful introspective sages who peopled the paintings of Tokugawa artists to the hapless rabble the printmakers of 1895 showed in full flight before Japan's modern troops.⁵⁶⁰ But for the Japanese prints, interest in them died out almost immediately after the war, subsequent depictions of the Boxer Uprising and the

⁵⁵⁷ Louis E. Virgin, *Japan at the Dawn of the Modern Age: Woodblock Prints from the Meiji Era, 1868-1912—Selections from the Jean S. and Frederic A. Sharf Collection*, exh. cat., Boston, MA, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 2001, pp. 64-65.

⁵⁵⁸ Okamoto, 1983, p. 44.

⁵⁵⁹ W.G. Beasley, *The Meiji Restoration*, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1972, p. 370.

⁵⁶⁰ Marius Jensen, 'Japan and the Chinese Revolution of 1911', in Fairbank and Liu (eds), pp. 339-40.

Russo-Japanese War were poorly received.⁵⁶¹ As carriers of information, the woodblock medium had been supplanted by photography. The fate of the Chinese prints is discussed in the Epilogue.

⁵⁶¹ Keene, in Okamoto, p. 10.

EPILOGUE

LOCATING THE PRINT MARKET, MAPPING THE FIELD

This Epilogue serves to introduce some new research in progress about the print commerce aspects as well as to summarize the findings and further directions for research from the study of victory pictures covered in this thesis.

I. Print Production and Distribution

Before the 20th century, sheet prints were rarely mentioned in conventional primary sources like official histories, records, gazetteers, art catalogues, or *biji* 筆記—memoirs, diaries, accounts or writings of individuals. Though ubiquitous in the daily lives of many, references to popular prints are largely absent from the literate elite world that could be reconstructed through the written word. This lack of textual sources, together with the ideological and folk-culture *nianhua* identity that had been grafted on to the sheet print in the 20th century, has made it challenging to build a coherent account within the discourses of mainstream art history. However, as research on Japanese *ukiyo-e* publications and the earlier ‘Gusu 姑蘇’ prints—mostly preserved in Europe and Japan—has shown, it is possible to develop a framework of understanding by adding to the body of documented print and through studies on the works themselves as primary sources.⁵⁶²

Despite having a well-studied visual culture, Suzhou-Shanghai is the least well documented of all the major sheet-print production centres as compared to Yangliuqing 楊柳青 and Yangjiabu 楊家埠.⁵⁶³ This oversight could have been due to the interest in other forms of print production from lithography to commercial graphic design. The perceived wisdom is that the woodblock print industry,

⁵⁶² In the field of *ukiyo-e*, see, for example, the work of Julie Nelson Davis who described her approach during a seminar entitled ‘Reading the Mirror of the Beauties of the Azure Towers, Compared’ at the Japan Research Centre, SOAS on 12 October 2011. Her book *Partners in Print: Artistic Collaboration and the Market for Ukiyo-e in Late Eighteenth-Century Japan* is forthcoming (University of Hawai’i Press). For the Gusu prints, see, for example, Kuroda Genji, *Seiyō eikyō wo uketaru nihonga* (Kyoto: Chūgai shuppan, 1924); Aoyama Shin, ed., *Shina ko hanga zuroku* (Tokyo: Otsuka kogeisha, 1923); Ono Tadashige, *Shina hanga sōkō* (Tokyo: Sorinsha, 1944); Oka Yasumasa, *Megane-e shinkō: ukiyoeshi tachi ga nozoita seiyō* (Tokyo: Chikumashobo, 1992); Kobayashi, 2006. Current research by Wang Cheng-hua focuses on the business practices associated with these prints and treats them as ‘commoditized and ready-to-buy visual objects’ (‘Chengshi yu shijue shangpin: Qingdai chuzhong qi Suzhou banhua de shangye mianxiang’, forthcoming). I am grateful to Wang Cheng-hua for so generously sharing her research with me.

⁵⁶³ The lack of data was also noted by Ellen Johnston Laing (see Laing, 2004, p. 44). For the more well-studied sheet print markets in North China, see Wang Shucun’s numerous publications on Yangliuqing and Flath, 2004. Both look at them from the perspective of *nianhua* production.

together with existing inventory and blocks, were destroyed by the Taiping rebels when they arrived at Suzhou in 1855, razing major studios in Fengqiao 馮橋 and Shantang 山塘 to the ground. The studios experienced a regeneration in the 1860s when many studios re-established themselves at Taohuawu 桃花塢.⁵⁶⁴ With the opening of Shanghai as a treaty port, many print shops relocated to the Old Parade Ground 舊 / 小校場 at the North Gate of the Chinese city, first acting as distributors for Suzhou prints before making their own (see Map 6).⁵⁶⁵ From a recent study on extant prints, it has been suggested that printmaking in Shanghai flourished relatively late, between 1890 and 1910.⁵⁶⁶ This is a claim that corresponds with the majority of the rubric from the Sino-French war prints that mention Shanghai as primarily a distributor. Little is known about these establishments other than their names that have been found on extant prints, and in present-day publications they are merely mentioned in a list.⁵⁶⁷ Several scholars have also noted the difficulty of distinguishing between prints from Suzhou and Shanghai and also the phenomenon of copying.⁵⁶⁸ Rather than attempt to differentiate between these closely related centres, here I suggest that it may be more constructive to think in terms of networks as the analogy of Yangliuqing illustrates.

Unlike other sheet prints, the wealth of rubric that can be found on the victory pictures, especially from the Sino-French and the Sino-Japanese wars, allow them to be used not just for their pictures but also as sources on marketing practices of print businesses.⁵⁶⁹ The information has been collated and appears as an Appendix in Volume II entitled 'List of Titles and Rubric'. The victory pictures discussed in the preceding chapters have shown how essential the rubric has been to orientating the viewer's understanding of both the visuality and the materiality of the print. The short account offered in this chapter, though specific to the victory pictures, serves as a starting point to map the sheet-print market and its connections within in the Shanghai-Suzhou and Greater South China

⁵⁶⁴ Higuchi Hiroshi, 'Soochow Block Prints' in *Suzhou chuantong ba hua Taiwan shoucang zhan*, 1987, p. 303. Higuchi Hiroshi. *Chūgoku hanga shūsei*. Tokyo: Mitū Shooku, 1967, p. 55.

⁵⁶⁵ Zhang Wei, 'Shanghai Xiaoxiaochang nianhua de lishi yanbian', in Feng Jicai (ed.), 2011, pp. 10-15; Laing, 2004, p. 48.

⁵⁶⁶ Zhang Wei, p. 25.

⁵⁶⁷ Ibid., pp. 11-13.

⁵⁶⁸ Laing, 2004, pp. 48-49; Zhang Wei, pp. 20, 23.

⁵⁶⁹ See the Appendix for the rubric from the BN and British Library albums.

nexus during the late 19th century. It is research in progress as more prints are discovered and integrated within the framework. But first, because of the absence of specific information, some generalities to provide background and enable comparisons and extrapolations to be made. The following discussion addresses the historicity of localization and regionalization in sheet print production, and introduces Yangliuqing by way of analogy.

1. Generalities

a. Regionalization and Localization

The earliest sheet prints were primarily votive, talismanic or apotropaic in purpose, or they were regarded as auspicious motifs that would bring luck to the place they adorned. While we do not know exactly when and where such prints were first made, accounts from as early as the Song period mention that they were being sold in the capitals and towns in preparation for the Spring festival. The range of ephemera included spring couplets (*duilian* 對聯), Door Gods, Kitchen Gods, calendars, Buddhist deities, Zhong Kui the Demon Queller, Gods of Wealth, gilded charms, and prints that were used for exorcism. Nostalgic accounts of life in the Northern and Southern Song capitals of Bianliang and Lin'an like *Dreams of Splendour of the Eastern Capital* (*Dongjing menghua lu* 東京夢華錄) by Meng Yuanlao (孟元老, 1090-1150) and *Old Tales of Hangzhou* (*Wulin jiushi* 武林舊事) by Zhou Mi (周密 1232-98) seem to imply that one would expect that a broad range of 'festive broadsheets' was to be found in towns and cities that were considered cultural and artistic centres.⁵⁷⁰

As evidenced by a pair of well-known prints depicting the *Four Beauties* and *Guan Yu* from the Jin period (1115-1234), now in the collection of The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, sheet print production had extended beyond the realms of popular religion and folk belief.⁵⁷¹ In particular, much has been written about *Four Beauties*, especially by Chinese and Japanese scholars in the first half of the 20th century who believed it to be among the earliest, if not the earliest, surviving popular Chinese print.⁵⁷² However, for the ensuing discussion,

⁵⁷⁰ Lust, pp. 27-8.

⁵⁷¹ See James C.Y. Watt and Maxwell K. Hearn. *The World of Khubilai Khan: Chinese Art in the Yuan Dynasty*. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2010, pp. 216-217, figs. 232-22.

⁵⁷² For a summary of these views by Aying, Wang Bomin, Kano Naoki, Naba Toshisada, see Lust, p. 29. More recently, Shih-shan Susan Huang has suggested that the print may have been simulating a painting (see Huang, 2011, pp. 137-38).

only two things about the print are important: where it was found and the information yielded by its rubric. Together with the *Guan Yu* print, *Four Beauties* was discovered among the ruins of Khara Khoto (Ch. Heishuicheng 黑水城) in Inner Mongolia by the Russian archaeologist Pyotr Kuzmich Kozlov (1863-1935) during his 1907-09 expedition to Central Asia. As Khara Khoto had been abandoned since at least the mid-14th century, these prints have the certainty of an early dating. *Four Beauties* also has an inscription with the name of its maker and its place of production: 'carved and printed by the Ji family of Pingyang (*Pingyang Ji jia diaoyin* 平陽姬家彫印)'. During the Jin period, the Jurchens established a government printing office at Pingyang, and the Daoist and Buddhist temples there also undertook large-scale projects, turning the town into a centre for printing in north China.⁵⁷³ Although many tantalising questions remain as to why Pingyang was chosen as a print centre and where did the expertise for making prints come from, and how long were these craftsman working there, there are no answers,⁵⁷⁴ and for our present purposes, it is only the connection between Pingyang and Khara Khoto that is important. It suggests that the regionalized nature of print production and the local networks of circulation that characterize popular print production in the 19th and 20th centuries had early origins.

b. Yangliuqing as analogy

During the Yuan and Ming periods, the explosion in drama and fiction and the invention of colour printing extended the repertoire of vernacular illustration. Not only made solely for the purpose of accompanying texts, iconic scenes from popular dramas and novels found their way into sheet prints and the decorative arts. By the High Qing period, sheet print production had reached its zenith in terms of its numbers, variety, quality and circulation, buoyed by economic prosperity and the emergence of an urban lifestyle that was reliant on entertainments and novelties. At the beginning of the 19th century, three distinctive print traditions could be discerned: a highly painted-over 'academic' style from Yangliuqing 楊柳青, near Tianjin; a 'rural' style as exemplified by Yangjiabu 楊家埠 in Shandong and a sophisticated 'urban' style from Suzhou 蘇州.

⁵⁷³ Watt and Hearn, p. 216.

⁵⁷⁴ Lust, p. 30, for example, wonders if print shops in Pingyang were run by craftsmen 'pressganged from the Northern Song capital Bianliang'.

The physical appearance of the print and the subjects-matter that were prevalent were determined by the location of these production centres, the consumers who bought them and the networks in which these pictures circulated. Thus, because of its closeness to the capital, Yangliuqing is said to have absorbed the formality of court painting, focusing on realistic representation and attention to fine detail; the highest quality prints were even referred to as *gongjian* (宮/貢尖 tribute or court pieces).⁵⁷⁵ By comparison, Yangjiabu, which was situated in the agricultural heartlands, produced works in a folksy, basic style on themes that were closely related to the farmer's calendar.⁵⁷⁶

By the end of the 19th century, although woodblock printing appeared to be a moribund technology for publishing, the picture of the sheet print industry is one of sustained diversification. The major print centres had developed spheres of influence, spawning satellite workshops and branches in nearby towns and neighbouring provinces.⁵⁷⁷ For example, the impact of Yangliuqing could be seen in the nearby provinces Hebei, Shaanxi and Shandong. Wuqiang in Hebei, Fengxiang in Shaanxi and Dongfengtai, another suburb in Tianjin made facsimiles (*fangzhipin* 仿製品) of Yangliuqing products. Weixian in Shandong began as a distribution centre before local workshops were set up to make prints in the Yangliuqing style. By the Guangxu period, illustrators from Yangliuqing were accepting commissions to produce pictures for the Weixian printmakers.⁵⁷⁸ A similar practice could be seen in the relationship between Suzhou and Shanghai.

Sheet prints were also taken along trade routes. In the 19th century, Yangliuqing was the northernmost major centre for sheet print production and thus had as its hinterland the whole of north China. Nevertheless, the expansion of the markets for Yangliuqing's products was a gradual process that was facilitated by transport routes to the northwest and northeast through a network of rivers.⁵⁷⁹ These came to include isolated border areas like Xinjiang, Mongolia

⁵⁷⁵ Xie Changyi, 'Qing mo de beifang nianhua', in Shanghai Tushuguan, 2000, p. 14.

⁵⁷⁶ Zhang Wei, 'Shanghai Xiaoxiaochang nianhua de lishi yanbian', in Feng Jicai (ed.), *Zhongguo muban nianhua jicheng — Shanghai Xiaoxiaochang juan*, Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 2011, p. 9.

⁵⁷⁷ Wang Schucun, 'Zhongguo nianhua shi xuyao', in Wang, 1991, p. 83 (first published in *Zhongguo meishu quanji: minjian nianhua*, Beijing: Beijing Renmin Meishu Chubanshe, 1958).

⁵⁷⁸ Wang did this research in the 1950s and derived this information from surviving craftsman as well as from tracking the movement of blocks regionally, *ibid.*, pp. 74-85.

⁵⁷⁹ Zhang Maozhi, 'Yangliuqing nan sanshiliu cun huaye xingshuai shilue', *Jinxi wenshi ziliao xuan bian (JXWZXB)*, vol. 5, Tianjin: n.p., 1991, p. 14.

and Tsitsihar (Manchuria).⁵⁸⁰ By the late 19th century, traders from Yangliuqing were famous for taking convoys out to these remote areas. In 1875, when Zuo Zongtang was sent to Xinjiang to reassert Manchu sovereignty, the logistical task of provisioning the army attracted merchants from Shaanxi, Gansu, Henan, Shanxi, Hunan and Hubei. Traders from Yangliuqing followed suit and pioneered the business of *gan daying* 趕大營 (lit. 'in pursuit of the great army'). Between January and April, wagon trains loaded with goods accompanied by dozens of pole carriers departed for Xinjiang on market days.⁵⁸¹ This coincided with the spring period when the sheet-print market was at its most active. As an indication of the reliance of Yangliuqing print producers on this regional trade, a number of sheet-print businesses like Yongzengli, Deshengheng and Xinji all went out of business when transport links to northeast were cut off.⁵⁸² It would appear that Yangliuqing sheet prints continued to be found and sold along these border areas up until the early 20th century: for example, a small collection of Yangliuqing prints in the Ferenc Hopp Museum in Hungary were acquired by World War One prisoners of war who had bought them at a small town at the Manchurian Chinese-Russian frontier when they were being repatriated from Siberia.⁵⁸³ Similar links to commerce and to marking points for dating can be observed in the victory pictures.

2. Specificities: Reading the Rubric

From the body of prints that I have examined, the rubric is most intense during the Sino-French War, tapering off during the Sino-Japanese War and disappearing altogether during the Boxer Rebellion. Most of the prints in the BN album have rubric on them and, most obviously, because that is where they were acquired, they reference Shanghai as a distributor (*jipi* 寄批). By the Sino-Japanese War, businesses in Shanghai were making their own blocks and printing (*keyin* 刻印), and some claimed even producing colour lithographs (*wucai shiyin* 五彩石印)⁵⁸⁴, and storing blocks (*bancun/bancang* 板存 / 板藏). Most of the addresses provided

⁵⁸⁰ Cong Wenzhi, 'Manhua Yangliuqing', *Dagong bao*, 10 March 1980; Wang Shucun, 'Yangliuqing nianhua shi gaiyao' in Wang, 1991, p. 15.

⁵⁸¹ Zhang Jiangcai, *Tianjin Yangliuqing xiaozhi*, 1938, (reprint in *Xiqing wenshi*, vol. 6, 1993, p. 36)

⁵⁸² Bo Kui, 'Yangliuqing maimai tongsu zazi', in *JXWZXB*, vol. 3, Tianjin: n.p., 1989, p. 139.

⁵⁸³ Mária Ferenczy, 'Modernization in Chinese Popular Prints at the Beginning of the Century: New Year Prints from the Yang-liu-ch'ing Workshop', *Ars Decorativa* 11, 1991, p. 174.

⁵⁸⁴ Colour lithography was not actually used in China until 1907; Japanese technicians were hired by publishers Wenming Book Company and the Commercial Press (Laing, 2004, p. 56).

were located near the City Temple (Yimiao 邑廟), the New North Gate (Xinbeimen 新北門) and the Old Parade Ground (see Map 6 for the area encircled in red in the old city). The distribution of prints were connected with paper-based businesses and some were even distributed by a collective of fan-makers (*tuanshanzuo* 團扇作).⁵⁸⁵

Apart from Wu Youru, the range of personal names reflected in the inscriptions are sobriquets (*hao* 號), a seemingly literati practice. The person behind the name cannot be identified since no records have yet be found. However, it would not be impossible to suggest that these names were just a commercial device to make the print more authentic and upmarket. These names largely have a sense of place, often other than Shanghai or Suzhou, as if reflecting the conflict of the time and the notion that an observer drew the picture. There is a more active use of names in the Sino-French War citing locations in the south especially Guangdong.⁵⁸⁶ Names like Qiuyue Dongshi 秋粵東氏 and Guangdong Fentuzhi 廣東忿土 are an assertion of identity and territory and display an anger with the French. As a province located between the battle sites both in Annam and in South China, it was a convergence of journalistic interest. These names and the activities they are connected to within the print production process lend credibility to the idea that they are fictitious. It seems unlikely even for a lowly literatus in the late Qing to have been engaged in the entire range of creative activity (*zhi* 製 or *zuo* 作) connected to sheet-print production process: drawing (*hui* or *xie* 繪 / 寫), inscribing (*ti* 題), and carving (*ke* 刻) as Meizhou Yinshi was. When Meizhou Yinshi's name appears once more in the Sino-Japanese War (Fig. 4.7), it is almost like a careless slip as the blocks depicting naval victory were recycled and adapted for use. Thereafter, Songshan Daoren 嵩山道人 (Daoist of Songshan, in Henan) takes its place, figuring in the Boxer Rebellion as well (Figs. 4.10 and 4.11).

There are no real claims for originality—that the picture was based on another one from a site closer to battle or more prestigious media seems to have made it more authoritative. The Suzhou printmakers Wujinzeng 吳錦增 consistently claimed that their prints were copied from originals produced in

⁵⁸⁵ See the Appendix in vol. II, 'Sino-Japanese War', no. 22.

Hong Kong or Guangdong (see Appendix, 'Sino-French War', 9 and 31). In one instance they claimed that the print was based on a photograph from Guangdong (廣東洋照原樣姑蘇吳錦僧造) or, better yet, that it was a replica of a photo (*yangzhao fanban* 洋照翻版) (Appendix, 'Sino-French War', nos. 26 and 37). There are no such published prints from these sources and based on the information on the print, I tried looking for them in Hong Kong but could find no trace. However, the reliance on photography is not unfamiliar as scholars since the 1930s have noted that foreign scenes in the illustrated pictorials were 'drawn from photographs in foreign newspapers and magazines'.⁵⁸⁷ These findings raise interesting questions for future research as to whether a hierarchy of print media existed for the audiences.

A decade separated the Sino-French and the Sino-Japanese wars and, through the rubric, it is possible to detect the changing public concerns and social development. Coinciding with the emergence of the mass media and news reportage, there is an emphasis in the Sino-French war that pictures were authoritative and of the moment. Some pictures claimed to have been published by the Shenbaoguan (see Fig. 3.24), while others claimed that they were published by the Shenjiang Xinbaoju 申江報局 (Shanghai New Bureau) or the Guangdong Ribaoguan 廣東日報館 (Guangdong Daily Press) after receiving news reports. There are consistently references that match the pictures to information received through the telegraph system and the news bureaux, however, the use of a generic name such as Fuzhou Dianbaoju 福州電報館 (lit. Fuzhou Telegraph Bureau) might lend the information they convey to a more cynical reading today and make them highly suspect—as these were unfamiliar media to their consumers, it probably made no difference. The scene of a naval battle apparently by Wu Youru was published by the Yuenan Dianbaoguan 越南電報館 (Vietnam Telegraph Agency) (see Fig. 2.24).

The Sino-Japanese War prints are less concerned with accurate representation and more with cultivating sentiment. Perhaps it was because Japan, the watchful and competitive neighbour, was the aggressor that presses with militant names about certain victory emerged, suggesting that they may have been from Inchon, and even made by a fictitious Japanese printmaker,

⁵⁸⁷ Britton, 1933, p. 70; Laing, 2004, p. 52.

through the use of font and subtle suggestion (see Figs. 4.6, 4.10 and 4.11, attributed to the Renchuan Bishengzhai 仁川必勝齋). The play on the use of Renchuan is sly as it can be read both as ‘certain victory in Inchon’ or ‘the Certain Victory Hall in Inchon’. Ultimately the success of the print did not rely on the rubric but on the established cultural stereotypes that enabled printmakers to weave a compelling narrative around the war.

Two names dominated in this body of prints, Yuquanxuan during the Sino-French War and Wenyizhai during the Sino-Japanese War. Was the prevalence of these names due to the way in which these prints were acquired, or could it suggest that victory pictures belonged to a category of specialized production. Continued investigation will perhaps reveal more patterns. For now, certain observations can be made, Yuquanxuan appeared to have expanded and become Yuquanlou with a presence in Jingling 金陵 (present-day Nanjing) by the Sino-Japanese war, and the Renchuan Certain Victory prints were distributed through them. The Wenyizhai appeared to have been responsible for a series of prints on Liu Yongfu and his family. From our perspective, taking into it the subjects, and the flashpoints of interest and connection over the three conflicts, these victory pictures cast a web over coastal and commercial interests especially in Southern China, from Hong Kong and Canton, to Xiamen through to Taiwan and the cities of Jiangnan. In comparison to Yangliuqing’s reach into Inner Asia, these are local productions trying to gain a global outlook. In the Sino-Japanese prints, the Chinese merchants (*huashang* 華商) become a constant source of information and engagement with Korea and then Taiwan. It is perhaps their interests who are addressed in these prints.

II. Conclusions and Directions

While the conditions of our viewing victory pictures today have changed a great deal from that of its original audience, the new meaning that contemporary analysis can provide is no less relevant. By creating a framework that encompasses a consideration of the image itself and its graphic lineage, the accompanying rubric, the technology used to create the print, and the contexts under which the prints were produced, radical shifts can be suggested in the understanding of late 19th century print culture, especially within the coastal culture of South China.

Before summarizing the findings of this thesis and the directions for future research in this relatively new field, it seems worth mentioning that examples of victory pictures depicting events from the Xinhai Revolution have been found in the collections of the British Museum and the Library of Congress, even though detailed analysis lies beyond the scope of this thesis. Here, the foreign aggressor has been transformed into the modernized revolutionary. Two identical prints (save for their titles) are of particular interest as they depict the same scene as Figure 3.28, and appear to be printed off the same blocks (since both show similar signs of wear and tear) (see **Figs. E.1 and E.2**). Respectively representing battles at Wuhan and Nanjing, these two prints were likely to have been issued quickly after the event and a short time apart from each other. Both refer to Li Yuanhong 黎元洪 (1864-1928), another renegade general, a Sino-Japanese War veteran who had been co-opted into the Republican rebel army by the Wuchang mutineers. However, both titles and inscriptions do not indicate a victor and the latter mentions only the casualties both sides inflicted, as if displaying an ambivalence of allegiance. It appears from the titles that the example from the British Museum was produced first: entitled *The Great Battle between the Sa Troops and the Revolutionary Troops on Land and Sea* (*Sa jun shuilu dazhan Geming jun tu* 薩軍水陸大戰革命軍圖), its Chinese date the ninth month coincides with the events of October 1911 in Wuchang (Fig. E1). Following the taking of Nanjing by the revolutionaries in early December, and a controversial massacre of Manchus in city,⁵⁸⁸ the print was used again but this time references to the Sa troops were removed from the beginning of the title and a reference to the fall of Nanjing inserted ‘南京下関’ – in hasty calligraphy, with the character 关 ingenuously inserted within the last character 門 (Fig. E2). The inscription had remained the same with the absence of the date. While the change in titles show the shifting focus in the perception of the dominant side from the Qing to the revolutionaries, the tone is somewhat muted and there is no hailing of victory. The stakes for going to battle changed, as this was a revolution and not a war. More significantly, without the Qing army, the depictions would become

⁵⁸⁸ Rhoads, Edward J. M., *Manchus & Han: Ethnic Relations and Political Power in Late Qing and Early Republican China, 1861-1928*, Seattle: University of Washington Press, p. 198.

irrelevant. In these circumstances, these prints appear tired to the point of obsolescence. The time for the victory picture had come to an end.

1. From Court to Market: Changing Context, Temporality and Style

In the mid-1760s, through his act of commissioning *Pictures of Meritorious Campaigns in the West* from engravers in France the Qianlong emperor had given the victory pictures a discrete identity distinct from other visualizations of war in the imperial milieu. As evidenced by a further seven sets of engravings that were produced at the Qing court over a period of sixty years, victory pictures came to be seen as a coherent visual narrative consisting of episodic scenes that depicted the army marching to war, in various modes of battle, taking prisoners and celebrating their triumphs and were, more than anything else, associated with the medium of print.

When viewed as a group, they can be seen as a map of the Qing empire reflecting the militarized and multicultural nature of its governance as well as the prevailing intellectual and cultural interests in European visual media and technology, geography, cartography and the taxonomy of peoples. Associated with other forms of cultural production under imperial auspices like the *Siku Quanshu*, some of the victory pictures were given as gifts or placed in public depositories of knowledge and were thus disseminated. Recurrent themes, formats, motifs and stereotypes were established and permeated all levels of society, as indicated by the popularity of the Miao albums and the imagery of the native Taiwanese as savages well into the late 19th century. Although there is no clear chain of transmission of the emperor's victory pictures into popular culture, they were not unfamiliar to his subjects since victory as a paradigm was writ large through commemorative projects and war itself was a highly visible enterprise.

The sheet prints depicting the Sino-French wars exhibit awareness of their imperial counterparts through their titles (as *desheng tu*), their specific subject-matter, the allusions to media (i.e. copper-plate rather than woodblock) and their landscape (as opposed to portrait or hanging scroll) format. Produced and distributed in coastal South China, a region that was greatly impacted by the Qing empire's attempts to modernize, the 19th century shifts in geo-politics and expansion of international trade, these prints are located at a critical juncture

when both the conduct and scopic regime of war was rapidly changing. While these prints adhered to the conventions of the victory picture and were not 'truthful' depictions of actual events as newspaintings in Western pictorials purported to be, they had a different sense of time from the emperor's *desheng tu*. Instead of being associated with the commemorative past and historical time, print producers attempted to situate their products in 'real' time or at least the recent past under the influence of the emerging mass media.⁵⁸⁹ Multi-layered devices in these prints—inscriptions, rubric and persistent visual motifs—referencing the indicators of modernity like telegraph bureaux, field reporting and modern technology were employed to give the victory pictures a perception of novelty, immediacy and authenticity (of the period as opposed to the 'culture of specificity, verifiability and factuality' that was associated with the newspaper medium⁵⁹⁰).

These prints, especially those from the period of the Sino-French War, chart a pictorial turn that saw Chinese graphic illustration move away from established idioms, some of which were in use at least since the Ming period, towards more realistic representation. In a culture that focused increasingly on the act of seeing (rather than reading), pictures acquired an autonomy that was not linked to texts. As meaning and interpretation was sought directly from the picture itself and not from pre-existing literature or notions, the traditional visual vocabulary was found to be inadequate for explaining the variety and complexity of new experiences and technologies. The practices of representation thus became more descriptive rather than prescriptive. Attempts to use conventions from the traditional illustrative repertoire to explain new phenomena resulted in bizarre interpretations (for example, Fig. 2.30 an interpretation or 'copy' of a lithograph in Fig. 2.29). As exemplified by the Battle of Mawei victory pictures, illustrators when confronted with the challenge of depicting a naval battle since they had no tradition of maritime painting took their references from a variety of sources ranging from European historical engravings and popular woodcuts (that

⁵⁸⁹ This sense of temporality while noted by various scholars in journalism and fiction remains relatively unexplored in terms of visual material (see Mittler, 2004; Des Forges, 2007; Christopher A. Reed, 'Introduction', in his edited volume with Cynthia Brokaw, *From Woodblocks to the Internet: Chinese Publishing and Print Culture in Transition, circa 1800 to 2008*. Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2010, p. 14).

⁵⁹⁰ Reed, 2010, 'Introduction', p. 13.

were imported into China since perhaps the early 18th century) to Chinese and Western pictorial journals then in fashion and even contemporary photographs. These diverse sources manifest themselves as oft-repeated motifs like the scale-like waves or the sinking ship, or as compositions like the line-to-line naval formation seen in the *Battle of Mawei* (Fig. 3.1) that hints at the vanishing point perspective. Ultimately, the physical appearance of these woodblock prints were a response to new print technologies like lithography which enabled minute pictorial detail as well as realistic pictorial representations to be easily produced and the growing interest in proper scientific and technical illustrations encouraged during the Self-Strengthening Movement. A 'new realism' could be seen in some victory pictures especially those by well-known illustrators like Wu Youru and Tian Zilin (Figs. 2.22a and b, 2.26).

2. *Transnational Flow vs. Localized Agency*

The development of the victory picture genre over time and space—from the Qianlong reign to the late 19th century, and from the initial commission of the imperial versions through the Jesuits to French engravers, to the availability of multiple visual sources from all over the world that illustrators like Wu Youru could access—charts the changing transnational flows of knowledge and trade in the early modern period. By the time the Sino-French war began, the acquisition of knowledge and commodities from the West was no longer a selective exercise or demonstration of power by an emperor but was a necessary condition of modernity and a consumerist society. Positioning the sheet print in this context reveals it to be a hybrid creature, contrary to the modern-day belief that it is intrinsically a product of Chinese folk culture. However, in comparison with other forms of media like the newspapers and the *huabao* that had a global orientation, and were more focused on raising awareness, conveying 'truth' and cultivating public opinion, sheet prints had a localized agency not unlike the woodblock-print culture of Japan during the same period. While these popular victory pictures were reproduced in their entirety in Western newspapers and pictorials as sources of fact (see Fig. 2.5), and Western illustrations were reproduced in Chinese publications like the Major brothers'⁵⁹¹, Chinese sheet-print producers, although copying amongst them was rife, appeared never to have adopted

⁵⁹¹ Wagner, pp. 113-15.

illustrations wholesale from other foreign publications. As the visual lineage of the maritime scenes reveal, such adaptations were piecemeal, often only of just selective motifs and, in a few unusual instances, font, more to suggest or hint at exotic locations involved in the war (Figs 4.6 and 4.10).

Such localized agency was distinctly derived from the interactive aspects of sheet prints. They were pasted on walls in spaces, both public and private, where people would gather to look at the print and discuss its contents (see Figs 2.13a and b). Even Ernest Major in his 'Preface' to the inaugural issue of the *DSZHB* the efficacy of these prints referring to the victory pictures as 'props for conversation'.⁵⁹² The characters, events and objects in these prints were thus selected and 'staged' in a way that paid no heed to conveying accurate information but served instead as devices for the audience to make associations within their own realms of understanding and fascination. Hence we have the unusual pairings of Admiral Courbet and Sir Harry Parkes (Figs 2.22a and b) and Liu Yongfu and his fictitious children (Figs 2.11a and b), or the oddly rendered versions of modern weaponry and the persistence presence of the hot-air balloon (Figs 2.29 to 2.32). There is perhaps no better way to demonstrate the continued agency of these prints and their 'unbound' quality than from anecdotal experience. At the end of every presentation I have given of this material, there are invariably requests for me to turn back to earlier slides. After questions have been addressed, I would find members of the audience gathered in front of the screen, studying the print intently, starting conversations with the person next to them, each offering a different interpretation or observation. While the 19th century conversations that revolved around these victory pictures may now be lost to us, these 21st century discussions about them serve as a strong reminder of the autonomy and agency of the visual print.

3. Fleshing the Skeleton: Victory Narratives for the Common Folk

Examination of the core group of prints depicting the three conflicts covered in this thesis reveals that the victory narrative as developed in the imperial milieu provided a template for sheet prints. However, unlike the grandiose sets of the emperors' pictures, the smaller-format serial pictures (Figs 4.8 and 4.9), and the Japanese triptychs, these sheet prints were produced mostly singly or at most as

⁵⁹² See Chapter 2, p. 77.

a pair (of former and latter pictures: *qiantu* 前圖, *houtu* 后圖)—perhaps because of economic reasons or that they were popular ephemera not expected to survive wear and tear. As such, the entire narrative—from the troops setting out to the incidents of battle and the subsequent capitulation and celebrations—was often conflated within one sheet (see, for example, Figs 2.9, 2.29, 2.30 and 3.28), or fragmented with a focus on particular scenes such as the open confrontation of adversaries (Figs 4.4, 4.5 and 4.17), the naval bombardment between warships and shoreline batteries (Figs 4.1a, b and c) and the presentation of prisoners (Figs 2.6, 4.18 and 4.19). Although the multi-scene formats did not die out, there appear to be increasing numbers of mono-scenic prints over the period of the three conflicts, probably for visual effect and to accommodate the graphic qualities of the new realism.

As the discussion on repetition and seriality in Chapter Four demonstrated, motifs, compositions and even entire pictures continued to be used through the duration of the three conflicts. However, even though the victory pictures remained the same narratologically, there was a distinct shift in their focus on specific details in the decade that separated the Sino-French and Sino-Japanese War. At the outset of the former, self-strengthening was at its most militant with the highly visible development of the Fuzhou Naval Yard and the Jiangnan Arsenal. Chinese urban audiences were still in the thrall of modernity and the exciting inventions and transformations of space it brought. As borne out by news reportage and other publications of the period, the prospect of war on Qing soil had whipped up patriotic fervour. These sentiments and enthusiasms as reflected in the victory pictures are discussed in Chapter Two and appear to peter out in the subsequent conflicts.

While the imperial victory pictures are focused on creating visual impact, strong storylines that are based on established literary tropes and cultural stereotypes are distinctive characteristics of the popular versions. Notwithstanding the prominence that the earliest Sino-French pictures gave to Liu Yongfu and his Black Flag Army, their exploits were somewhat overshadowed by the concurrent commentary on fantastic weaponry and the novelty of the maritime depictions as the war shifted from land to sea. A return to this emphasis on plot can be seen in the pictures of the Sino-Japanese war, particularly those of

the campaign in Taiwan, and later in the Boxer Rebellion. These stories have little to do with the textual and historical accounts we know today, they are embellishments or elaborations built upon the victory narrative. War as imagined by the sheet-print illustrator was always a Qing victory achieved by a renegade general who was assisted by armies of women warriors and savages (Taiwan aborigines or Boxers) against imperialist soldiers or *wokou* using strategic ruses worthy of the Three Kingdoms epic. Ultimately the tension between the commentary and the narrative reflect the conflicting sense of curiosity and malaise that inhabited the 19th century image.

The staginess of some settings and the poses assumed by the characters suggest a possible connection with performance. This would not be surprising as both victory pictures and prints depicting the theatre had the landscape format in common and several of the printmakers who produced theatrical prints also created victory pictures. While it lies beyond the limits of this thesis to comprehensively trace the sources of these storylines and explore their other links to popular culture, these are lines of enquiry for future fruitful research.

4. *An Age of Print Anxiety*

This is a thesis that could only have been written in the digital era as internet searches yielded valuable materials from sources all over the world where the limited time and resources of physical fieldwork could not reach. These materials have helped considerably to broaden the scope of visibility connected with the victory pictures and to substantiate the observations discussed here, many of which began as 'hunches'. From the cohesive body of prints assembled, the characteristics of the victory picture as a distinct genre of pictorial depiction during the Qing dynasty could be defined and located within the dialectic of the transnational flow of trade and knowledge and the localized agency of communities along the South China coast. Such an approach decouples the sheet-print from the folk-culture-*nianhua* nexus to which it had been pegged since the early 20th century and positions it within the socio-historical contexts of the period. With increasing numbers of prints being digitized by institutions or compiled for publications, it is possible to establish alternative ways of classifying the visual print as a whole and of linking printmakers to specific types of production.

The present transition from the print era to the digital era provides an analogy for the anxieties of obsolescence and choice that the traditional woodblock print producers and their audiences, respectively may have felt when the new printing presses and ‘new ways of seeing’ arrived in China around the mid-19th century. These technologies transformed the physical appearance of the visual print in no small measure both through the use of the landscape (*heng* 橫) format sheets, as well as the introduction of a realistic style that depicted life that was seen instead of life that was comprehended through an aggregation of coded conventions and common motifs. They also brought new formats to publishing, ramping up the circulation of images and motifs, and the pace and scale of print production.

Unlike the European scenario where studies of print culture could be summarized as, according to Roger Chartier, the efforts to understand the Gutenberg revolution as ‘new acts arising out of...new forms’, Chinese print culture scholarship has cast a wider net that involves the study of developments woodblock printing from the Tang to the Qing period.⁵⁹³ As the historical development of print culture in China and East Asia has shown, the adoption of new technology is not a straightforward linear process of progress because of innovation, where the success of new advanced technology would mean obsolescence of an earlier less sophisticated medium. Power and commerce are key to the promotion of technology.⁵⁹⁴ The complicated practices of picturing discussed here from tracing and copying to adaptation, modularization and seriality show a continuing dialogue, response and engagement between woodblock print producers with works created from other print technologies.

As indicated in the first section of this Epilogue, much research remains to be done on the significance of the rubric and the explorations into the print commerce dimensions remain at a germinal stage. However, it would seem that woodblock printmakers were employing multi-layered marketing devices to give

⁵⁹³ Chartier, 1989, p. 1; Reed, 2004, pp. 4-5.

⁵⁹⁴ A case in point being Japan and China in the 8th century when both already possessed the ability to produce woodblock prints. Printing flourished in China, as T.H. Barrett has surmised, under the aegis of Wu Zetian (r. 690-705), as a popular medium for the transmission of Buddhism (see T.H. Barrett, *The Woman Who Discovered Printing*, New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press, 2008). By comparison, Japan, continued with its scribal culture until the Heian period after the costly printing of the *Hakyumantô Darani* (*One Million Pagodas and Dharani Prayers*) between 764 to 770 under the sponsorship of Empress Shôtoku (718-70).

their victory pictures a sense of newness and modernity, and a sense of authenticity and immediacy, that was derived from the growing understanding of how news was received and the commonality of field reportage. The extravagant claims these victory pictures make should be read as the traditional printmaking industry's response to the challenges posed by new technologies and modernity. The period of the three wars coincided with a transition from the use of traditional woodblocks to Western techniques like photolithography, at a time when 'craft' and 'technology' could be said to be competing media. The woodblock print industry did not become extinct with the arrival of new technologies but instead mounted a lively and creative challenge.

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VICTORY PICTURES IN A TIME OF DEFEAT
Depicting War in the
Print and Visual Culture of Late Qing China
1884-1901

Yin Hwang

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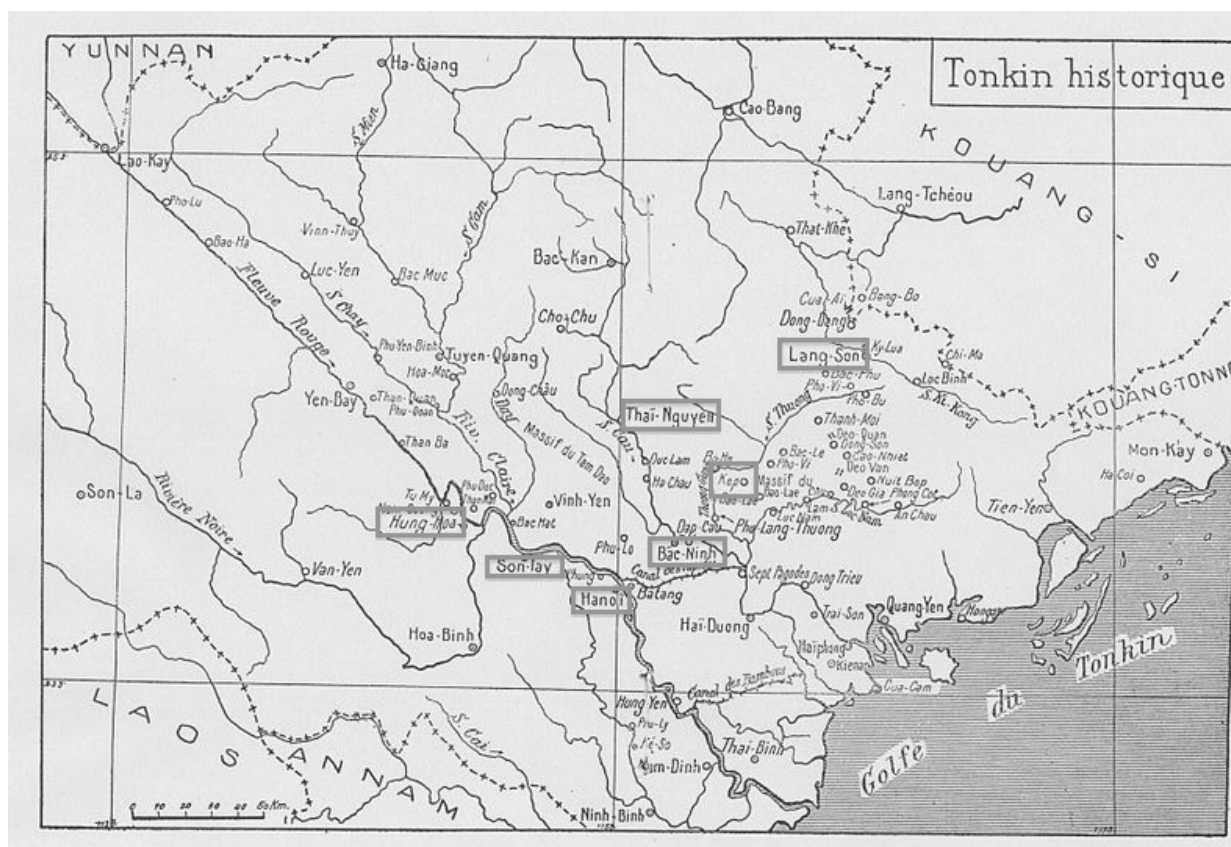
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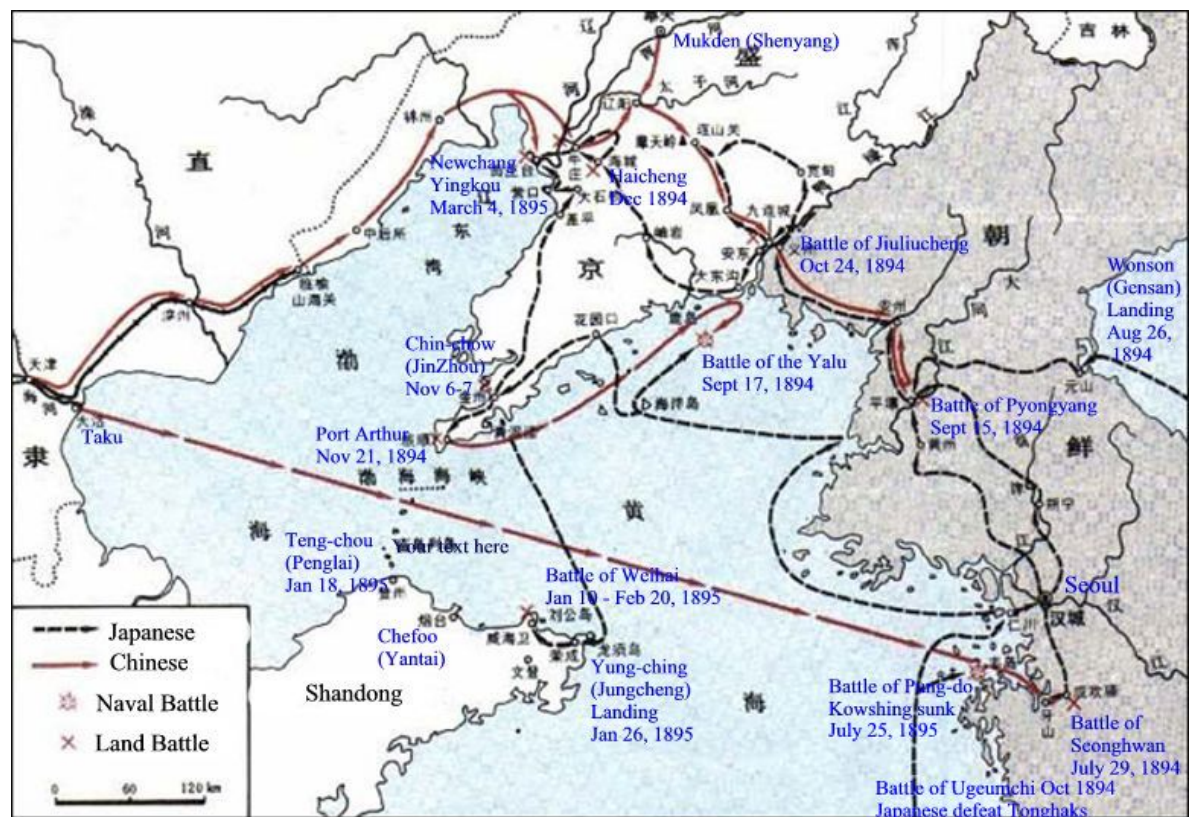
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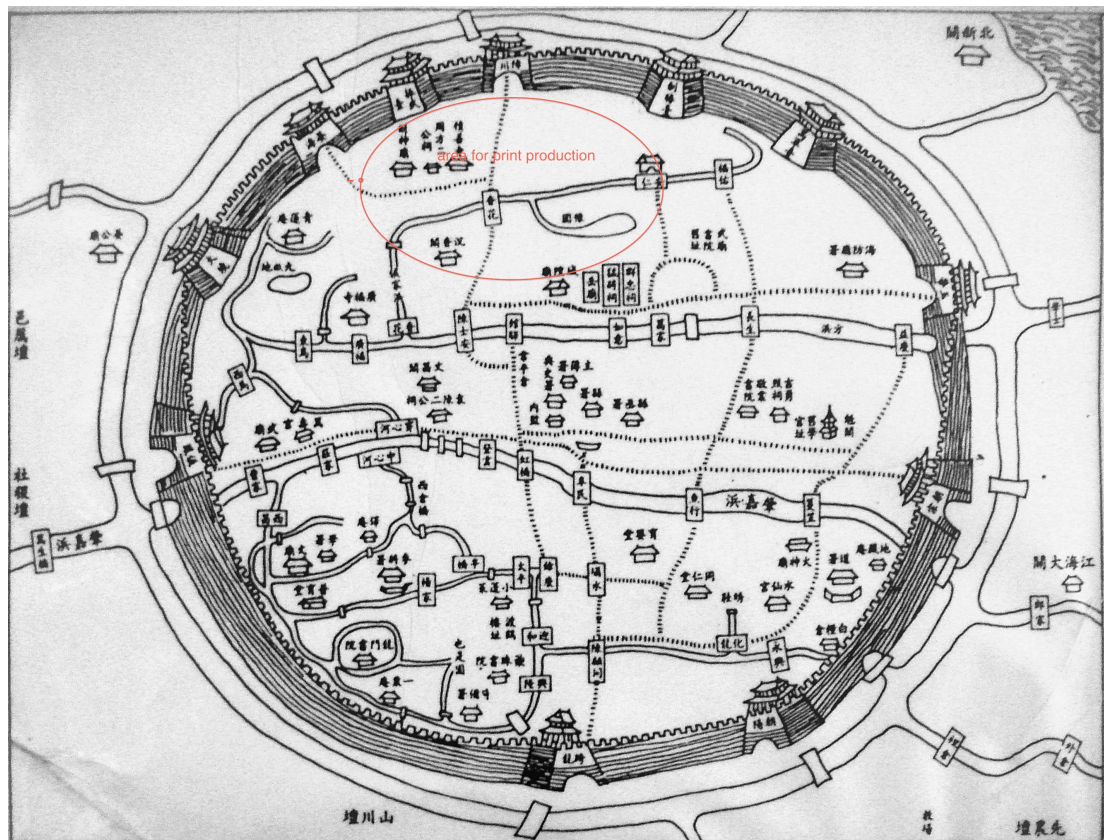
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The Art Institute of Chicago

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Italy, around 1499
Woodcut coloured using stencils
54.8 x 80 cm
British Museum (PD 1932-7-9-1)
© Trustees of the British Museum

(Fig. 3.7a) Detail from *The Battle of Zonchio* showing the cannons and red stencilling

(Fig. 3.8) *Naval Battle in the Gulf of Naples*
Pieter Breughel the Elder (c. 1525-69), 1558-62
Oil on panel
42.2 x 71.2 cm
Galleria Doria Pamphilj, Rome,

(Fig. 3.9a) *St. James Day Battle fought between the English and the Dutch, 4 August 1666*
Unknown Dutch artist, 1666 or after
Engraving

(Fig. 3.9b) *Perfecte Vertoonigh en Volkomen verhael... 11, 12, 13, 14, Junij, Anno 1666*
(*Perfect Representation and Description... 11, 12, 13, 14, June 1666*)
By Cornelis Grave, 1666 or after
Etching
50.9 cm x 45.1 cm
National Maritime Museum, Greenwich (PAH 7599)
(<http://collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/147546.html>)

(Fig. 3.10a) *Spanish Insolence Chastized.- The Battle of Portobello*
By Fred Shantoon, 3rd May 1740
Engraving
(after <http://www.cichw1.net/pmporto.html>)

(Fig. 3.10b) *The Battle of Malaga*
By Isaac Sailmaker (1633-1721), after 1704.
Engraving
(after <http://www.cichw1.net/pmsail2.html>)

(Fig. 3.11) Plate depicting the ship *Vryburg*
 According to the Dutch inscription, made for Christian Schooneman, 1756
 Porcelain with *famille-rose* enamels
 Diameter 22.8 cm
 British Museum (Franks.598)
 © Trustees of the British Museum

(Fig. 3.12) Fan depicting the *Empress of China*
 China, c. 1784
 Ivory, ink on paper
 Historical Society of Pennsylvania
 (after http://ocw.mit.edu/ans7870/21f/21f.027/rise_fall_canton_04/cw_gal_03_thumb.html)

(Fig. 3.13) A glass painter copying from a European engraving
 Canton, China, c. 1790
 Gouache on paper
 Victoria & Albert Museum
 (after http://ocw.mit.edu/ans7870/21f/21f.027/rise_fall_canton_04/cw_gal_02_thumb.html)

(Fig. 3.14) *The City of Quang Chew or Kanton*
 By John Nieuhoff (1618-72), c. 1655
 Engraving
 18 x 29 cm
 Donated by Sir Paul Chater
 Hong Kong Museum of Art (AH1964.0111)

(Fig. 3.15) Detail of *Pacifying the South China Sea*
 Anonymous, after 1810
 Handscroll, ink and colour on paper
 Length 18 metres
 Hong Kong Maritime Museum

(Fig. 3.16) Engagement of the *Alceste* with the Bocca Tigris Forts in 1816
 Drawing by John McLeod (d. 1820), engraving by Dubourg
 Aquatint
 24.5 x 35.3 cm
 Donated by Sir Paul Chater
 Hong Kong Museum of Art (AH1964.0095)

(Fig. 3.17) British man-of-war and a steamer, likely the *Nemesis*
 Qing period, 1840 and after
 Colour woodblock print mounted as a handscroll
 British Library

(Fig. 3.17a) Detail of the print in Figure 3.17a showing the inscription

(Fig. 3.18) *The Kangji*
 China, c. 1889-95
 Colour woodblock print
 The British Museum (OA+,0.6, AN678083)
 © Trustees of the British Museum

(Fig. 3.19) Perspectival 'floating picture' (*fouhua* 浮畫)

China, late 17th-early 18th century

Woodblock print

Muban Educational Trust

(Fig. 3.20a) Detail from *Situation Maps for the Coastal Defence of Guangdong* (*Guangdong haifang xingshi tu*) showing the ship built by Pan Shicheng

(after Chen, 1934, fig. 3)

(Fig. 3.20b) Detail from *Situation Maps for the Coastal Defence of Guangdong* (*Guangdong haifang xingshi tu*) showing the ship design by Admiral Wu Jianxun

(after Chen, 1934, fig. 4)

(Fig. 3.21a) Illustration from the *Haiguo Tuzhi* showing the complete drawing of a steamer

By Wei Yuan, 1852 edition

(Fig. 3.21b) Illustration from the *Haiguo Tuzhi* showing the top and side views of a steamship

By Wei Yuan, 1852 edition

(Fig. 3.22) Illustration from the *Haiguo Tuzhi* showing the four-wheel cannon

By Wei Yuan, 1852 edition

(Fig. 3.23) Drawing of a safety boat from October, 1874 issue of *The Peking Magazine* (*Zhongxi wenjian lu*)

(Fig. 3.24) *General Liu Overcomes—Complete Victory of a Water Battle*

Published by Shenbaoguan, March 1884

Woodblock print

Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris

(Fig. 3.25) 'French Attack Pagoda Anchorage' ('Fa fan Majiang')

From *Dianshizhai huabao, yi* 1, p. 3, September 1884

By Wu Youru (d. 1893)

Lithograph

(Fig. 3.26) Detail showing the shipping along the Bund from 'Yingjie Huangpu tan' in the *Shenjiang Shengjing tu*, juan shang, p. 56.

(Fig. 3.27a) Photograph of the *Yangwu*, c. 1870s

(After Zhongguo Junjian Bowuguan 中國軍艦博物館 [Chinese Warships Museum, <http://60-250-180-26.hinet-ip.hinet.net/cover.html>])

(Fig. 3.27b) Photograph of the wreck of the *Yangwu*, c. 1884

(After Zhongguo Junjian Bowuguan 中國軍艦博物館 [Chinese Warships Museum, <http://60-250-180-26.hinet-ip.hinet.net/cover.html>])

(Fig. 3.28) *Battle at Changmen* (*Changmen jiebao*)

With inscription by Guangdong fentu zi, autumn 1884

Colour woodblock print

Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris

(Fig. 3.28a) Detail showing the cannon fire engulfing the arsenal

(Fig. 3.28b) Detail showing the gold-label battery

(Fig. 3.29) The battle at Fuzhou
French, Épinal, 1884 and after
Colour print

(Fig. 3.30) The battle at Fuzhou
French, Épinal, 1884 and after
Colour print

(Fig. 3.31) *The Seventh Prince Reviews the Battlements at Lushun*
Qing period, 1886 or after
By Liu Mingjie, Yangjiabu
58 x 110 cm
British Museum
© Trustees of the British Museum

(Fig. 3.32) *Prince Chun's Inspection of the Defense Placement of the North Fleet*
Commissioned and inscribed by Zhou Fu (1837-1921), Colour on paper
251 cm x 316 cm
National Palace Museum, Taipei
(After <http://theme.npm.edu.tw/exh102/tailwind/ch/photo16.html>)

(Fig. 3.32a) Detail showing the portraits of Prince Chun, Li Hongzhang and Admiral Shanqing.

(Fig. 3.32b) Detail showing the inscription by Zhou Fu

(Fig. 4.1a) *Complete Victory at Hung Hoa (Hunghe quanjie)*, 1884 or after
Colour woodblock print
Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris

(Fig. 4.1b) *Victory at the Yalu River*
China, 1894 or after
Colour woodblock print
British Library, London

(Fig. 4.1c) *Dagu Fort, Tianjin*
China, 1900 or after
Colour woodblock print
SOAS, University of London

(Fig. 4.2) *The Great Battle at Fuzhou-Changmen: Kill the Wicked Soldiers, Capture the French Admiral Alive (Fuzhou-Changmen dazhan: sha zeibing, shengqin Fa jiang)*
China, August 1884 or after
Woodblock print
Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris

(Fig. 4.2a) Detail showing Admiral Courbet fleeing.

(Fig. 4.2b) Detail showing Liu Yongfu astride and bearing the captured French admiral aloft.

(Fig. 4.2c) Showing the brick wall

(Fig. 4.3) *Zhenhai: Victory at Ningbo*
(For details, please see Fig. 2.19)

(Fig. 4.3a) Detail showing the additional colour block with the wall removed

(Fig. 4.4) *Battle of Langson (Liangshan jiebao)*

China, 1884 or after

Woodblock print

Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris

(Fig. 4.5) *Battle of Asan*

China, 1894 or after

Colour woodblock print

British Library, London

(Fig. 4.6a) A comparison of the rubric in Figures 4.5 (left) and 4.4

(Fig. 4.6b) Rubric taken from the Japanese print *Picture of the Hard Fight of the Scout Cavalry-Captain Asakawa* by Kobayashi Kiyochika,
January 1895

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Sharf Collection (2000.180)

(After *MIT Visualizing Cultures*

http://ocw.mit.edu/ans7870/21f/21f.027/throwing_off_asia_01/2000_180_1.html)

(Fig. 4.6c) Character 𠂇, *uroko* and a page from a manual showing comparable examples of Japanese type face.

(Fig. 4.7) *Victory Picture of Naval Battle in Korea (Chaoxian shuizhan desheng jietu)*

China, 1894 or after

Colour woodblock print

British Library, London

(Fig. 4.7a) Detail showing the inscription

(Fig. 4.7b) Colour block showing the aniline-based magenta

(Fig. 4.8) *Pictures of the War between Annam and France (Huitu Yuefa zhan shu)*

China, May 1884

Woodblock printed book

Shanghai Library

(Fig. 4.8a) Pictures 1 and 2

(Fig. 4.8b) Pictures 3 and 4

(Fig. 4.9) *General Liu Captures Commandant Rivière (Liu Tidu shengqin Liweili)*

China, 1884 or after

Lithograph with colour

Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris

(Fig. 4.10) *Victories by General Ye's troops on land and on sea/Battle of Asan (Wonu zhanju Hanjing tu/Yashan dajie)*

China, 1894 or after

Inscribed by Songshan Daoren

Colour woodblock print

British Library, London

(Fig. 4.11) *Victories by General Ye's troops on land and on sea/The Dwarf Slaves Occupy Seoul (Wonu zhanju Hanjing tu/Yejunmen shuilu lianjie tu)*

China, 1894 or after

Inscribed by Songshan Daoren

Colour woodblock print

British Library, London

(Fig. 4.12) *The Victories of Ye's troops on land and sea (Yejunmen shuilu bingjing tu)*

China, 1894 or after

Inscribed by Songshan Daoren

Colour woodblock print

British Library, London

(Fig. 4.13) *Overcoming Bac Ninh (Kefu Beining quantu)*

China, 1884 or after

Colour woodblock print

Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris

(Fig. 4.14) *Song's Troops Overcome Seoul (Songjunmen kefu Hanjing)*

China, 1894 or after

Woodblock print

British Library, London

(Fig. 4.15) *Recovering Bac Ninh (Huifu Beining)*

China, 1894 or after

Colour woodblock print

Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris

(Fig. 4.16) *Recovering Tianjin (Huifu Tianjin)*

China, 1900 or after

Colour woodblock print

(Fig. 4.17) *Miss Liu Faces the Wonu (Liu xiaojie yu wonu duizhen tu)*

China, 1895 or after

Colour woodblock print

British Museum

© Trustees of the British Museum

(Fig. 4.18) *General Liu Captures Admiral Kabayama (Liu dajiangjun tinghu wodu Huashan panwen)*

China, 1895 or after

Woodblock print, British Library

(Fig. 4.19) *Battle of Yangcun (Yangcun dazhan)*

China, 1895 or after

Colour woodblock print

British Museum, © Trustees of the British Museum

(Fig. 4.20) 'Fire-boats Approaching a British Warship' from *Kaigai Shinwa Shūi*, vol. 2
By Mineta Fūkō (1817–83), 1849

Colour woodblock book

Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Yale University

(After http://ocw.mit.edu/ans7870/21f/21f.027/opium_wars_japan/gallery)

(Fig. 4.21) *Story from the Sino-French War*

Japan, by Utagawa Kunisada III, 1884

Colour woodblock print

Sharf Collection, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (2000.161)

(After http://ocw.mit.edu/ans7870/21f/21f.027/throwing_off_asia_01/2000_161_1.html)

(Fig. 4.22) *Our Naval Forces in the Yellow Sea Firing at and Sinking Chinese Warships*

Japan, by Kobayashi Kiyochika, October 1894

Colour woodblock print

Sharf Collection, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (2000.380_22)

(After http://ocw.mit.edu/ans7870/21f/21f.027/throwing_off_asia_01/2000_380_22_1.html)

(Fig. 4.23) *Popular Viewing of the Captured Chinese Warship Zhenyuan*

Japan, by Ogata Gekkō, December 1894

Colour woodblock print

(Fig. 4.24) *Our Army's Great Victory at the Night Battle of Pyongyang*

Japan, by Kobayashi Toshimitsu, September 1894

Sharf Collection, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (2000.051)

(After http://ocw.mit.edu/ans7870/21f/21f.027/throwing_off_asia_01/2000_051_1.html)

(Fig. 4.25) *Night Battle at Pyongyang*

China, 1894 or after

Colour woodblock print

British Library

(Fig. E.1) *The Great Battle between the Sa Troops and the Revolutionary Troops on Land and Sea (Sa jun shuilu dazhan Geming jun tu)*

China, possibly Nanjing, 1911 or after

Colour woodblock print

British Museum

© Trustees of the British Museum

(Fig. E.2) *The Fall of Nanjing: A Great Battle on Land and Sea – A Picture of the Revolutionary troops*

China, possibly Nanjing, 1911 or after

Colour woodblock print

The Library of Congress, Washington, DC.

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